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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
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154 without a
government
budget for
FY 2009
DAYS

INSIDE



Non-Profits

With the future of U.S. newspapers in doubt, one idea that is gaining ground is converting newspapers into tax-exempt nonprofits.

BUSINESS...Page 14



Shanghai Surprise

My experience with a simple can of Pepsi Light represents the Shanghai I saw Saturday—a little off, a little different, but very intriguing nonetheless.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

“Many of our schools employ teachers whose status are IRs. We're worried that if they will not be considered, PSS may lose these educators.”

—Dandan Elementary School principal Jonas Barcinas

DUE TO UNCERTAINTY OF IR STATUS

PSS may lose 90 more employees

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER



ECONOMY HITS FLAME TREE FEST

Parker Yobe, logistics committee chair for the 2009 Flame Tree Arts Festival, shows the festival grounds layout yesterday. The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs has cut the festival fees by \$50 for artists and food vendors, and will not be having a booth competition during the April 22 to 26 festivities to cope with the current economic conditions. **See story on Page 6.**

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

NMI, A. Samoa want industry committees to set wage hikes

WASHINGTON, D.C.—CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, American Samoa Gov. Togiola Tulafono, and American Samoa Delegate Eni Faleomavaega have joined together to urge Congress and the Obama Administration to re-establish the

Special Industry Committees that will set the minimum wages for both U.S. territories until the General Accountability Office issues its report on the impact of the wage hikes in 2010.

See NMI on Page 4

34-percent drop in Fund assets

Board officials re-elected

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund's total assets, which include investments and

loans, dropped by 34 percent or from around \$514 million in Fiscal Year 2007 to about \$340 million as of yesterday, according to Fund administrator Mark Aguon.

“The global economic crunch rep-

See 34-PERCENT on Page 4



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, American Samoa Delegate Eni Faleomavaega, CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, and American Samoa Gov. Togiola Tulafono pose for a picture after an emergency meeting in Faleomavaega's Washington office on Feb. 23, 2009.

Due to the uncertainty of the immediate relative status under federalization, the CNMI Public School System may lose more teachers and other support staff once the law takes effect on June 1.

See PSS on Page 4

CHC fails to monitor water for disinfection byproducts in 2008

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Health Center failed to monitor its drinking water for disinfection byproducts in 2008, according to a citation issued to CHC by the Division of Environmental Quality, a

See CHC on Page 4

DCCA: Fewer food stamp recipients since 2006. **PAGE 3**
CUC emergency extended for 8th straight month. **PAGE 6**

Local

'NMI immigration laws on IRs punitive in nature'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

An Immigration Division hearing officer has found the CNMI's recently adopted immigration laws to be "punitive in nature" when it comes to revoking or denying the entry permit applications of immediate relatives.

Linn H. Asper, Immigration's Administrative Hearing Officer, said the division must provide clear and convincing evidence of fraud before revoking or denying the renewal of an IR entry permit.

"To rule otherwise would allow the division to deprive people like [Muhammad Saiful Islam] of valuable rights and subject them to the severe penalty of deportation based on appearances rather than on facts," said Asper in his order that reversed the Immigration Director's decision to deny the renewal of Islam's IR entry permit.

The hearing officer ordered Immigration to process the renewal of the IR permit of Islam, a Bangladeshi national who is married to Cornelia Panuelo, a citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Cornelia left Islam on Saipan when she went to Arizona in 2004 to work as a caregiver. She

Decision not to renew Bangladeshi's IR permit reversed

has not returned to the CNMI since then.

According to Immigration records, Islam, an alien worker, married Cornelia in November 2001. At the time of their marriage, Islam was 28 years old, while Cornelia was 47. Islam had worked in the CNMI since 1994, while Cornelia had lived on Saipan since 1977.

After their marriage, the couple lived together in a rental house in San Roque and maintained a normal marital relationship until 2004. The couple did not acquire any real property or significant personal property during their marriage. They have no children.

In 2004, the couple decided that Cornelia should travel to Arizona to take a job because she was not able to find satisfactory employment on Saipan after their marriage.

As an FSM citizen, Cornelia could travel freely to the continental U.S., but Islam was not eligible for admission to the U.S. mainland.

In June 2004, Cornelia left Saipan. In Arizona she works as a caregiver to the elderly, earning about \$1,300 a month, plus room

and board at her work location.

The couple occasionally correspond with each other for birthdays and holidays. They maintain regular weekly telephone contact.

Soon after her arrival in Arizona, Cornelia became very ill. She incurred almost \$30,000 in uninsured medical costs. Her need to repay the medical expenses and her desire to establish residency in order to become a U.S. citizen has extended her stay in Arizona.

Cornelia has financially assisted Islam from time to time by sending him money through Western Union transfers from Arizona to Saipan.

Islam renewed his IR entry permit for two years after Cornelia moved to Arizona. The Immigration director, however, denied his 2006 renewal application in April 2007 for alleged violations of Immigration law and regulations.

Islam, through counsel Joe Hill, appealed.

Asper presided over the hearing at the Immigration Office last Feb. 3. Assistant attorney general Kate Busenkell and deputy Immigration director

Antonio Sablan appeared for Immigration. Islam and Hill were present. Cornelia testified at the hearing by telephonic connection.

In his order, Asper said this is a case involving questions of first impression regarding recently adopted CNMI changes to immigration laws and regulations.

Title 3 Section 4372 of the Commonwealth Code gives the Immigration director the authority to deny the renewal of an entry permit. The director can deny the renewal if he or she "determines that there are substantial grounds to believe that the application or entry permit was based on fraudulent grounds, or that the applicant made material misrepresentations on the application."

Asper said these factors, supplemented by others adopted by regulation, make up a long list designed to distinguish genuine marriages from

"sham" marriages.

The rules, Asper said, focus on personal contact before the marriage; knowledge of each other's background, beliefs, practices and habits; marital indicators such as having children, filing taxes together, owning property or bank accounts jointly; and most importantly in Islam's case, living together in the same residence.

The immigration statutes in question, although not criminal laws, "are punitive in nature," Asper said.

Asper said Immigration does not seriously contend that Islam's marriage was fraudulent in its inception.

"Perhaps they would not have married if it were not for the immigration advantages presented. At the hearing, it was established that the couple shared a bona fide married life until Cornelia left in 2004," he said.

The hearing officer noted that

the ultimate issue in the appeal is whether or not the separation of Islam and his wife show that "the circumstances indicate that the spouses do not intend to share the same residence."

Immigration pointed to the extended absence of Islam's wife and the failure to Islam and Cornelia to visit each other or to maintain joint accounts or file joint tax returns as evidence of their lack of intent to share the same residence.

At the hearing, Asper said, the couple provided reasonable explanations for their continued separations.

The need to earn money to pay off medical expenses alone justified Cornelia's extended stay in the U.S., the hearing officer said.

Asper said the uncontested evidence leads to the conclusion that the circumstances of the separation of the spouses do not indicate an intention to end the marriage or to fraudulently continue it.

March is declared Red Cross Month



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez and American Red Cross staff and volunteers pose for a photo yesterday at the Governor's Office. The month of March is American Red Cross Month.

The month of March has been officially declared American Red Cross Month.

Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez, along with American Red Cross NMI Chapter staff and volunteer members took part in a proclamation signing yesterday at the Governor's Office on Capital Hill.

This month the Red Cross will be coordinating numerous community activities. Red Cross volunteers will be setting up information booths at tourist and local hot spots such as the Garapan Street Market at the

Paseo de Marianas every Thursday, at the Civic Center every Saturday for Sabalu market and the Tuesday's Farmers Market at Fishing Base.

Besides these activities, the Red Cross will be holding their 2nd Annual Super CPR Saturday at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan's Hibiscus Hall on March 21.

For the past 127 years the American Red Cross has led the way in disaster preparedness and response, health and safety training, communication between military families and

other international services. This year Red Cross is taking time in March to focus on the volunteers and employees who demonstrate such compassion and generosity by supporting the Red Cross in the CNMI.

Throughout the month of March, more than 700 Red Cross Chapters around the country celebrate with special events, training and fundraisers to give the community a chance to participate and to learn more about the Red Cross and the work that they do. (ARC)

Hundreds of mayors to assemble on Saipan



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Agana Heights Mayor Paul M. McDonald, president of the Association of Pacific Island Local Governments, met Feb. 27 at Shirley's Restaurant in Hagatna, Guam, with officials from the 12th Tinian Municipal Council to plan for the 2nd Annual Pacific Mayors' Conference in May. With McDonald are, from left, Joseph T. San Nicolas, executive director of the Tinian Municipal Council; John A. Cruz, mayor of Hagatna; Eugenio L. Villagomez, secretary of the Tinian council; McDonald; Antonio H. Borja, chairman of the Tinian council; and Gusto Sanchez, director of maintenance for the Tinian Health Center.

AGANA HEIGHTS, Guam—Hundreds of mayors from the Pacific Rim are expected to congregate in Garapan, Saipan, for the 2nd Annual Pacific Mayors' Conference from May 14 to 17 at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

The conference is an activity of the Association of Pacific Island Local Governments.

Agana Heights Mayor Paul M. McDonald, association president, said he expects more than 300 mayors and municipal-level officials from all over the Philippines, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau to assemble for the conference.

"Following the great inaugural mayors' conference that was held last April in Guam, hundreds of mayors' offices have put this event on their calendars for this year," McDonald said. "This is an exciting opportunity for Saipan to host these village- and city-level official from hun-

dreds of neighborhoods around the Pacific. We will all do our best to make their conference meaningful and their visits memorable."

The Mayors' Council of Guam and the Saipan and Tinian Municipal Councils, and the mayors offices of Saipan and Tinian are sharing hosting of the event.

The slogan of the conference is "Maximizing Municipal Muscle," and the focuses of the conference sessions are to look at changing immigration and tourism patterns due to new U.S. visa regulations for the Marianas, and to address preparations for the military buildup in the Marianas in regards to potential benefits for Pacific neighbors in such areas as manpower and supply requirements.

Immigration officials and experts will talk about developments with the federal takeover of immigration in the Northern Marianas, which

takes effect on June 1, and coordination with Guam's visa-waiver program; and the U.S. Department of Defense's Joint Guam Program Office will explain what is going on with the military buildup in the region.

Among highlights of the conference are speeches by local experts, officials and dignitaries, a trade fair, a pre-opening cocktail party, a dinner with CNMI government officials, and a trip to Tinian for hosting by the Association of Marianas Mayors.

The gold sponsor of the 2nd Annual Pacific Mayors' Conference is Tan Holdings Corp. and the silver sponsor is Joten Enterprises Inc.

Last year's inaugural conference attracted more than 450 delegates from around the Pacific Rim, making it the largest gathering of government officials ever in Guam and the region. (PR)

DCCA: Fewer food stamp recipients since 2006

Cop arrested for domestic violence

Common-law wife says Wabol choked her, threatened to shoot her

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

A police officer was arrested for allegedly beating his common-law wife and threatening to shoot her with his service firearm outside their house in Dandan Thursday afternoon.

Police Officer John K. Wabol Jr., 22, was arrested for assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

When police officers responded to the scene, the wife was reportedly crying and shaking with fear. She had red marks on her neck.

The victim told police it was not the first time that Wabol physically abused her, but that Thursday's was the worst yet.

The police officer was taken to the Superior Court yesterday for a bail hearing. Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo imposed a \$10,000 cash bail for his temporary liberty. Preliminary hearing was set for March 11 at 9am.

Govendo ordered Wabol to surrender any and all firearms that he owns. The judge prohibited the police officer from having direct or indirect contact with the victim, her mother, and their children.

Detective Abaraham C. Villagomez stated in his report that the victim suspects that Wabol is seeing another woman so she had gone to Wabol's residence in Dandan to pick up her children. As she was passing Jin Store, she saw Wabol's car come into her lane so she pulled over. The officer approached the victim's car, opened the passenger door, and took the car seat with one of the children.

Wabol transferred the car seat to his car and then left. The victim shouted for help at Jin Store then followed Wabol to

his house.

When the victim got down and approached the house, Wabol allegedly punched her in the face. He then allegedly choked her.

The victim's mother-in-law tried to stop the two from fighting.

The victim said she saw Wabol went to his vehicle and take his police issued firearm. This prompted the victim to run to their neighbor's house where she stayed until police arrived.

Detective Villagomez said DPS received a call from an unknown person about a domestic incident Thursday at 4:34pm.

Villagomez said when two police officers arrived at the scene, one of them asked Wabol for his police issued Smith and Wesson .9mm sidearm.

Wabol replied that his gun was in the house. When one responding officer checked the house, Wabol's mother said the defendant had the gun on his back.

The victim later came out from a neighbor's house after seeing police officers. Crying and shaking, she told police she was scared of Wabol.

When Police Officer Jesse Seman asked where the gun was, the victim said Wabol had it because he was chasing her to shoot her.

When Officer Seman approached Wabol and asked for the gun, the defendant claimed it was inside his personal vehicle. Wabol told Seman that he will get it from the car and at the same time tried to retrieve the gun from under the driver's seat.

Officer Seman, however, instructed Wabol to stay away. When the defendant forced his way, Officer Seman placed him under arrest.

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Food stamp recipients in the CNMI posted a significant drop in the last three years, according to the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

DCCA Secretary Cecilia T. Celes said this could be attributed to three factors: increase in minimum wage, attrition because of non-compliance with rules, and recipients moving off-island.

Records obtained by the Saipan Tribune showed that last October 2008, the agency provided assistance to 7,606 clients compared to 7,694 in the same period in 2007. DCCA had 8,192 recipients in October 2006.

Celes said the minimum

wage increase from \$3.05 to \$3.55, and now \$4.05 made a large number of recipients ineligible for food stamp assistance.

Celes also said that a number of food stamp recipients were terminated for violating program rules and regulations.

She disclosed that many program clients have also moved off-island because of the current economic crisis.

DCCA presently extends \$133 monthly assistance to a household size of one, if the income is zero. The maximum monthly income allowable, meanwhile, for a household size of one is \$541.

Celes said that in terms of dollar value, DCCA issued \$620,259 worth of food stamps in October 2008; \$618,866 in October 2007; and \$674,375 in

the same period in 2006.

For November 2008, DCCA recorded 7,593 recipients valued at \$622,408 compared to only \$603,353 for 7,516 clients in November 2007.

It was in November 2006 when the agency posted 8,187 recipients, of which \$674,666 were provided assistance.

Last December, Celes said they issued \$617,711 to 7,513 recipients; \$607,823 for 7,626 clients in December 2007 compared to \$670,517 granted to 8,106 clients in December 2006.

The secretary said these are just a sample of the fluctuations in the total number of recipients from 2006-2008 for the months of October to December.

Comparing January 2008 to January 2009, Celes said there

is a difference of 197 less clients in 2009.

Although more families applied for the program, Celes said the agency denied their application due to ineligibility.

"We also have a 52-percent increase in the number of those seeking food assistance but were denied because of ineligibility during the same period," Celes added.

The Division of Nutrition Assistance Program in the CNMI, also known as the Food Stamp Program, was established to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and well being of Commonwealth residents by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income, zero-income and needy families and individuals.

Committee gearing up for MMAC

The Marianas March Against Cancer is set to take place on May 22-23, 2009, at the Hopwood Junior High School in Chalan Piao. Every year, one of the main highlights of the event is to honor Team Courage. This team consists of people who are currently battling and surviving cancer. If you know of any person interested in participating with Team Courage, email Nora Sablan at norasablan@gmail.com or call her at 285-5124.

At the last Team Captains' meeting, a briefing of the financial report was done and the Northwest raffle tickets were distributed to the individual team captains. For more raffle tickets or more information on forming a team, email Reina

Camacho at reinacamacho@gmail.com or Tara White at tara670@hotmail.com.

The next Team Captain's meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 11, 2009, at 5:30pm, at the Hyatt Regency's Chamolinan Room. Teams are encouraged to take advantage of the Early Bird registration special.

The MMAC committee's next meeting will be on Thursday, March 12, 2009, at 12pm. The venue will be announced at a later time.

For more information regarding this event, e-mail Catherine Attao (attao20@yahoo.com), Chris Concepcion (chrisa-concepcion@gmail.com) or visit the website at www.ccamarianas.org. You may also call 682-0050. (PR)



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IN CUC DISCONNECTION SCAM

Ex-disconnection crew gets 3 years in prison

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona yesterday imposed a three-year prison term on a former Commonwealth Utilities Corp. disconnection crew member who was among those involved in a disconnection scam.

Manglona sentenced Francisco F. Faisao to five years in prison, all suspended except for three years, for violating the CUC Code.

The 41-year-old Faisao was given the ability to apply for parole.

Manglona ordered the defendant to pay a \$500 fine and set a restitution hearing.

After serving his prison term, Faisao will be placed on probation.

Special Assistant Attorney General William Downer told Saipan Tribune after the hearing that the government had recommended a five-year term.

"However, in light of the judge's explanation in which she took into account all the different sentencing

factors such as deterrent value, the level of Frank Faisao's culpability in comparison to his co-defendants in the same case, the prosecution is happy with the judge's sentence," Downer said.

"In light of all the co-defendants acceptance of responsibility, the judge recognized that distinction and based the severity of Mr. Faisao's sentence accordingly," he added.

Defense lawyer Edward Arriola Sr. refused to comment.

Manglona dismissed in November 2008 one count of theft of services and two counts of conspiracy to commit theft of services filed against Faisao.

Manglona made the decision after the Attorney General's Office moved to drop those charges with finality.

Of the five defendants, only Faisao proceeded to trial. During the bench trial in December, Manglona found Faisao guilty of one count of violation of the CUC Code.

According to court records, Faisao allegedly got \$1,096.85 in the scam.

Manglona last week imposed a

three-year prison term on former CUC Credit and Collections Division supervisor Elaine Quitugua Terlaje for violating the CUC Code.

"This whole conspiracy that lasted for years could not have been possible without Ms. Terlaje's involvement and permission," said Manglona in a written order.

34-PERCENT

From Page 1

resented about 60 percent in the total drop in assets, while the government's non-payment of employer contribution contributed 40 percent in the drop in assets," Aguon said yesterday.

At the same time, members of the Retirement Fund board of trustees re-elected the current officers to another term led by chair Juan T. Guerrero and vice chair Pedro Dela Cruz during Friday's board meeting on Rota.

The meeting will be reconvened on March 10 on Saipan.

The \$340 million in total assets as

On May 24, 2007, authorities arrested the five CUC employees. In exchange for cash, they conspired to reconnect individuals who have been disconnected or did not disconnect delinquent accounts.

Former CUC disconnection crew Ricardo C. Sablan pleaded guilty to misconduct in public office. Former

of yesterday brings to \$879 million the Fund's total liability.

Unfunded liability is at \$539 million, which is 61 percent of the Retirement Fund's total liability.

Investments alone dropped by 34 percent, from about \$468 million to \$308 million as of yesterday, Aguon said.

"We took a big hit from the global economic crunch. We also have a drawdown of a little over \$20 million in the last four months or an average of about \$5 million a month," said Aguon.

This brings to some \$120 million the Fund's total drawdown to fund the benefits of the government's pension plan.

Board chair Guerrero earlier said the "main threat to the Fund's investments

customer service representative Rita I. Tarope and former disconnection crew Joaquin Elameto Norita pleaded guilty to violating the CUC Code.

Sablan was given one-day prison term. Tarope's sentencing was set for April 1. Norita was sentenced to six months in prison without the possibility of parole.

now is the constant drawdowns to fund pension cost."

He added that the CNMI pension program may be wiped out in five years or as early as three years due to the government's unpaid obligation and the impact of the global economic crisis on the NMI Retirement Fund's investment portfolio.

For FYs 2006 and 2007, a law legalized the suspension of payments to the Fund. Although the suspension was lifted in FY 2008, the government is still delinquent in its payments.

Government contributions are to fund current operations, pension and other benefit costs, as well as to service the long-term actuarially accrued liability.

NMI

From Page 1

In a letter addressed to Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, the three leaders said the Special Industry Committees are necessary to ensure that any further increases in the minimum wages of American Samoa and the CNMI will not further harm their respective economies.

Faleomavaega said he called for an emergency meeting in his Washington office on Feb. 23, 2009, to draft and send a unified message to Congress and the Administration on this issue. CNMI Delegate Gregorio Sablan was also invited to the meeting.

"I want to thank Governor Togiola and Governor Fitial for making time in their schedules to meet with me on Monday prior to our scheduled Inter-agency Group on Insular Affairs discussions with U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar on Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009," Faleomavaega said. "Given the urgency and seriousness of the situation, the governors and I agreed at our emergency meeting that it was important to present Secretary Salazar with a unified message when it comes to resolving minimum wage in American Samoa and CNMI."

"This is why we spent time drafting, reviewing, and putting a plan in place to present to Secretary Salazar in hopes that

he will seriously consider what we have to say," said Faleomavaega. "At the IGIA meeting, Secretary Salazar assured us he will carefully review this matter."

Similar letters were also sent to chairman Daniel K. Inouye of the Senate Appropriations Committee, chairman George Miller of the House Education and Labor Committee, chairman Edward Kennedy of the Senate HELP Committee, and chairman Jeff Bingaman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Each of the letters was signed by Faleomavaega, Togiola, and Fitial.

P.L. 110-28 mandates an automatic increase of 50 cents per hour every year until 2014 for American Samoa,

and 2015 for the CNMI when the minimum wages of both territories would be at par with the federal level. P.L. 110-28 also mandated the U.S. Department of Labor to undertake a study to determine what impact these increases might have on both economies.

In their letter, the three asked for re-establishing Special Industry Committees to determine federal minimum wage increases in American Samoa and the CNMI until such time as the Government Accountability Office can assess the impact of past and future increases and report back to Congress no later than April 15, 2010.

In the final form of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the due

date of the GAO report was changed from 2009 to 2010.

"Given the serious implications this change in date may hold for American Samoa and CNMI, we are writing to Chairman Miller and Senators Inouye and Bingaman to request their further help and assistance in offering an amendment to the FY09 Omnibus appropriations bill that will reestablish Special Industry Committees until Congress can be provided with the information it needs to make a responsible decision about both economies. To date, it is our understanding that Congress will not defer minimum wage until it has more reliable data," they said. *(Saipan Tribune)*

CHC

From Page 1

copy of which was obtained by *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

If CHC fails to take steps outlined by DEQ to correct the violations, the division may issue an administrative order against CHC that may include administrative fines of up to \$25,000 per day for each violation of the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations.

The CNMI Drinking Water Regulations require community and non-transient non-community public water systems to monitor annually for disinfection byproducts.

DEQ director Frank M. Rabauliman, in a Feb. 18 notice of violation addressed to Health Secretary Joseph Kevin P. Villagomez, said division records showed that CHC's water system failed to perform the proper monitoring during the January 2008 to December 2008 monitoring period.

"Accordingly, Commonwealth Health Center is in violation of the parts 2141.132 of the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations," Rabauliman told Villagomez in the two-page notice of violation.

Villagomez is currently off-island. Acting Health Secretary Pete Untalan did not return this reporter's call at press time yesterday for comment on the notice of violation.

As of yesterday, it was learned that DEQ did not receive any monitoring

report or results from CHC.

Rabauliman asked CHC to perform the required sampling as soon as possible, but no later than Dec. 31, 2009.

"You must actually collect and send the sample to a laboratory by this date. Simply paying for the sample is not sufficient to avoid another violation," Rabauliman said.

The DEQ director also instructed the government hospital to notify its customers and staff of the monitoring violation by hand delivery and by continuous

posting in conspicuous places within the area served by CHC's water system.

CHC is also required to send DEQ a copy of the notice to customers, with the date of the notice, the method of notification, and, if posted, the locations of posting.

"Posting [of the notice] must continue for as long as the violation exists or for a minimum of seven days. You must repeat notice by posting/delivery annually for as long as the violation exists.

PSS

From Page 1

This was the consensus among school administrators, who asked PSS to look into how the possible impact could be prevented in their schools.

Dandan Elementary School principal Jonas Barcinas on Friday disclosed that approximately 90 teachers may be affected by federalization.

A check with the PSS human resource office yesterday confirmed that as much 96 of its staffing are considered IRs. These include classroom teachers, support staff, and other PSS employees.

"The number is based on conversation with fellow principals. Many of our schools employ teachers whose status are IRs. We're worried that if

they will not be considered, PSS may lose these educators," Barcinas said.

He said this would compound PSS' problems in resolving the teacher shortage, considering the difficulty in finding replacements due to resignations and retirements.

In his school, although only a few have IR status, Barcinas believes their absence will still have a big impact. DES is home to 460 students.

Saipan Tribune learned that during a recent principals' meeting, administrators asked PSS management to act on their plight before it is too late.

At San Vicente Elementary School, principal Joaquina DLG. Salas said her school is among those that could be hit hard by federalization.

"I have teachers who are still in the IR status and I am afraid to lose them once federalization comes in because

we need to once again find replacements, which is very hard," she said.

CNMI law prohibits PSS from hiring non-U.S. citizen employees. Federal representatives have said that come June, only two categories will be issued—immigrant and non-immigrant.

PSS has difficulty in filling all the needed teacher positions due to qualifications and budget issues.

"We raised this concern with PSS and they are aware of it. We were told that management would find more information on the issue," she said.

Garapan Elementary School principal Yvonne Reyes, said that because of the uncertainty of the IR status, her school stands to lose not only a significant number of its faculty but students as well. GES is home to 791 students.

Saipan Southern High School vice principal Craig Garrison is also wor-

ried about the impact of federalization on its student and teacher population. He believes that a lot of his students have IR parents, if not non-immigrant ones.

He also mentioned employing a few teachers who have IR status.

"This is something serious that we need to find a solution... to prevent a more chaotic situation for our schools," he said, adding he's encouraging these IRs to work on their papers before it is too late.

Marianas High School principal Karen Borja also acknowledged having some teachers and students who might be affected by the federalization law.

Concern on IRs yet to reach BOE's attention

Board of Education vice chair Herman T. Guerrero yesterday said these con-

cerns about IRs have yet to reach the board's attention.

"We haven't really looked at it... We will find out from the commissioner some information about this matter," Guerrero said yesterday.

Guerrero said he may ask the education commissioner for a breakdown of the employees who are in this category and for more details and recommendations.

CNMI Delegate to U.S. Congress Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan recently disclosed that federal lawmakers seem to be unwilling to issue a visa for immediate relatives. They have also yet to act on the CNMI's request to delay the implementation of the law for 180 days.

Without any delay, Department of Homeland Security will take over local labor and immigration systems starting June 1.

SO WHO'S PAYING FOR THE FEDERALIZATION LAWSUIT?

Sablan sues Fitial, Inos, Baka to compel disclosure

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Tina E. Sablan has decided to take Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to court to compel the administration to disclose where it is getting the money to fund the lawsuit against federalization.

Sablan filed without a lawyer a petition for mandamus in the Superior Court last Friday. She named Finance Secretary Eloy Inos and acting Attorney General Gregory Baka as co-defendants.

Press secretary Charles Reyes Jr. told Saipan Tribune yesterday that the administration is going to respond to the lawsuit in court.

The congresswoman asked the Superior Court to give her lawsuit priority over other civ-

il cases and to set an immediate hearing.

She sought an order mandating Fitial, Inos, and Baka to fulfill their obligations under CNMI law by making available the requested materials within 48 hours of the court's decision.

Sablan requested the court to find the defendants liable for court costs and any civil penalties over their failure to comply with her requests.

She also asked the court to order the defendants not to transfer, alter, or destroy the public records that she has been seeking for inspection or examination.

In a statement, Sablan appealed to the court to order the disclosure of certain records relating to funds used in Fitial's lawsuit against the federal gov-

ernment pursuant to the Open Government Act.

"The Administration has thus far declined to disclose fund-

ing sources, contracts with outside legal counsel, amounts paid to date, and other types of information related to the governor's lawsuit which many citizens, myself included, believe should be open to the public," she said.

In her petition, Sablan asserted that the refusal of Fitial, Baka, and Inos to disclose records identifying funding sources and contracts connected

to the lawsuit that has been filed on behalf of the CNMI people "is a violation of the Open Government Act."



Sablan

The lawmaker requested copies of contracts related to the lawsuit against federalization, including the contract between the CNMI government and law firm Jenner & Block; documents relating

to payments of the contracts; documents detailing funding sources for the contracts; and documents identifying where money was reprogrammed in order to finance the lawsuit.

Baka has declined to produce the records. He asserted that such documents are exempt from the OGA because they are related to a pending issue in the lawsuit and would not be discoverable by the United States.

Baka's decision had prompted Sablan to file last Dec. 11 the same OGA request with Finance, seeking records related to funding sources for Fitial's lawsuit.

In a Dec. 19, 2008, letter, Inos also declined Sablan's request, explaining that the documents are exempt from disclosure under the OGA "because they are not discoverable by the United States under the attor-

ney-client privilege."

Inos said documentation identifying funding sources and contracts between the CNMI and outside litigation counsel "has been made indisputably relevant to the Section 903 controversy" by the lawmaker's letter to the governor dated Oct. 16, 2008.

Inos said the exemption from OGA disclosure applies only while the Commonwealth's Section 903 litigation remains pending.

Once the lawsuit is concluded, the Finance Secretary said, a provision of the OGA will no longer pose a delay to Sablan's inspection of the records.

WASC: Lawmakers should spare NMC from 'politics'

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In a letter to the Board of Regents, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges implicitly tells local lawmakers to keep the Northern Marianas College out of politics.

House Health and Education Committee chair Rep. Ralph Torres disclosed yesterday that WASC chair Dr. Barbara Beno had written to board chair Charles Cepeda to emphasize that only the board has the duty to evaluate the college president.

"In this letter, it clearly states that the board of regents has the fiduciary duty to evaluate the chief administrator of the college and all concerns pertaining to this issue should be directed to the regents," Torres told Saipan Tribune.

The lawmaker said this is the same reason why they have kept mum on the allegations raised against NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez, who has been criticized because of her management style and practices.

"We're not intervening in their day-to-day operation...but rather just requesting an update on their progress," Torres said, adding that before the final submission of the report on April 1, the House committee has required NMC officials to submit a weekly report on its accreditation updates.

"We want to know how they are taking care and addressing the issues on recommendations 1 and 2," he said.

The lawmaker also disclosed that WASC doesn't want to see any meddling in the college's operations.

"WASC stated also in the letter that any influence or involvement in itself is a violation of the WASC accreditation. The commission emphasized that the regents have their own responsibility on the chief administrator...and not the lawmakers," he said.

"Standard 4B1 states that the governing board had the highest and clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college who is the president...and once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole, it advocates for and in defense of the institution if undue influence and pressure [are present]," Torres quoted a portion of Beno's letter yesterday.



Torres

The lawmaker said the letter's contents will be shared with fellow lawmakers.

"Basically, it tells the Legislature that 'this is not your responsibility...and leaves politics out of this...'" Torres explained, adding that his committee is now directly contacting the board about NMC accreditation and other issues.

Last month, some faculty members expressed dissatisfaction with Fernandez's performance as chief executive officer. They cited issues of "improper termination," "illegal hiring," and "retaliation" against employees—allegations that the president has repeatedly denied.

The list of former NMC employees who were tagged as "improperly terminated or forced to resign" was then disclosed to the media.

However, the education committee chairman admitted that they have limited authority to inquire on this issues.

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDSPACIFIC
FINANCIAL
CORPORATION,
Plaintiff,Civil
Action
No.
06-0178

vs.

AMENDED
NOTICE
OF
SALEGREGORIO C.
DELA CRUZ and
BERNADITA S.
DELA CRUZ,
Defendants.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on December 5th, 2008, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth herein below, all of the right, title, and interests of Defendants, in and to the property described as:

Lot No. 019 H 36 (formerly known as Lot 2, Block 36), as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 019 H 00, the original of which was registered on March 1, 1971, as Document No. 710, at the Saipan Land Registry Office.

1. **Date, Time, and Place of Sale:** The sale will be held on Tuesday, March 31st, 2009, at the Law Offices of Timothy H. Bellas, Cactus St., & Botones Ave., Garapan Beach Road, at the hour of 10:00 a.m. The sale will be open to the general public.

2. **Inspection of Property:** The property described above is located on the island of Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. It is the obligation of the bidder to inspect the property. Failure to inspect the property or any portion thereof will not constitute ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.

3. **Warranties and Covenants:** All property listed for sale in this Notice will be sold in its current condition, and at its current location. The sale will be held without any warranties or covenants whatsoever, whether express or implied, including but not limited to warranties of title, merchantability, and/or fitness for any purpose whatsoever, all of which warranties and covenants are hereby expressly disclaimed. Neither the undersigned nor the Plaintiff may give any warranty or covenant, express or implied, with respect to the property listed for sale in this Notice. Neither the undersigned nor the Plaintiff shall be liable for the quality of the property listed for sale in this Notice, or for any defect in the description thereof. Buyers shall not be entitled to rescission, damages, or any other remedy on account thereof.

4. **Conduct of Sale:**
a. **Reserve.** The auction sale may be held with reserve. The reserve price on any property offered for sale may or may not be disclosed to bidders, in the sole discretion of the undersigned.

b. **Rights and Duties of Auctioneer.** Consistent with the laws, customs, and usages of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales, the undersigned shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale: (1) to withdraw the property listed for sale in this Notice before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted; (2) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any bid is accepted, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and (3) to reject, on behalf of the seller, any and/or all bids, for any reason.

c. **Bids.** Bids may be submitted in advance for the property listed in this Notice. The highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the property at the time of the auction. Advance bids may be submitted only in writing, signed by the bidder, and delivered to the Law Offices of Timothy H. Bellas. The bidder assumes all of risk of non-delivery, late delivery, or mis-delivery of bids. Any person, including the Plaintiff, may bid in person or through an authorized agent at the auction sale, whether or not such person has submitted an advance bid.

d. **Disputes.** The undersigned may re-submit any property listed in the Notice if a dispute arises as to any bid thereon.

5. **Enforcement of Auction Sale.**

a. **Deposit.** Every successful bidder shall pay to the undersigned a deposit often percent (10%) of the purchase price immediately after the sale in consummated. Payment shall be in cash or by certified check. The balance must be paid to the Plaintiff, in care of Timothy H. Bellas Law Office Trust Account, within **three (3)** days from the date of sale, in cash or by certified check. If the balance is not so paid, Plaintiff will retain the deposit as liquidated damages, and will again offer the property for public sale.

6. **Memorandum of Sale.** If requested by the undersigned, the successful bidder shall sign a Memorandum of Sale, immediately after the sale of the property is completed at the auction.

7. **Court Approval Required.** Every sale is subject to approval by the Court. The auctioneer makes no warranties or promises with respect to court approval of the sale, including but not limited to the time in which such approval may be granted or denied. No delay in the granting of court approval shall be ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any successful bidder. The successful bidder will be promptly notified if and when court approval is granted or denied.

8. **Removal or Storage of Personal Property.** The successful bidder shall have one (1) working day after court approval of the sale to remove any personal property purchased from the place of sale. After the expiration of this 24-hour period, the successful bidder shall bear the entire risk of loss of or damage to such property, and shall be liable for all expenses of caring for and/or storing such property.

9. **Changes of Terms and Conditions.** The undersigned and the Plaintiff reserve the right to change any of the terms hereof by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale, or the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on all bidder by constructive notice.

Dated this 4th day of February, 2009.

/s/ Timothy H. Bellas
Law Offices of Timothy H. Bellas, LLC
Auctioneer
Tel. No. (670) 323-2115

CUC emergency extended for 8th straight month

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Acting Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez extended for the eighth straight month the state of disaster emergency for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., citing additional reasons for the declaration including power outages, eight water pumps that are out of service, and failed wastewater collection pipes.

The acting governor signed the latest disaster declaration on March 1; it will last for 31 days.

The signing of Executive Order 2009-02 means that CUC remains under the administration's control to ensure that CUC's

rented generators from Aggreko will continue to produce power and prevent rolling blackouts, pending compliance with federal environmental laws.

"This declaration is still necessary to protect the health and safety of our children, our senior citizens, businesses and all other CNMI residents and visitors," Villagomez said in his nine-page executive order, which also allows the administration to award contracts without going through the bidding process.

CUC faces additional challenges due to the failure of its electric distribution facilities. In February, for example, Saipan experienced 23 hours

of partial field outages, but no whole island blackouts. Some of these outages were necessary, scheduled outages.

"Virtually all of these outages were due to deteriorated power distribution hardware... There is no indication that any of the above situation will be resolved in the next month," states the executive order.

CUC has also determined that its Tank 104 used oil facility is structurally unsound and must be emptied of its used oil in advance of severe weather, particularly a serious typhoon, to avoid any potential harm to the CNMI's waters, including the lagoon.

"CUC continues to occasionally lose generation capacity, which creates intermittent blackouts on portions of its system," Villagomez said, adding that CUC continues to rehabilitate Power Plant 1's engine 7 and is preparing units 5 and 1 for rehabilitation.

As of the writing of the executive order, Villagomez said eight pumps are out of service at CUC water wells.

Materials have entered the wastewater collection pipes through pipe failure, he added.

"By today's disaster emergency declaration, I intend to enable CUC, within the intent of Public Law 16-9, to con-

tinue to implement the temporary power contract which it signed. The purpose is to make the electric system reliable as soon as practicable during the period of repair of CUC's generators," he said.

The declaration directs CUC to document procurement activity and notify specific officials; contract with an independent power producer for two years or less; provide within 30 days permits or compliance plans; procure the labor and equipment needed to fix the Chalan Kiya distribution system; and remove used oil from tank 104 and other barrels; among other things.

DCCA cuts Flame Tree festival fees, shelves booth competition

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In light of the current state of the economy, the organizer of the 28th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival has cut this year's fees by 33 percent to encourage local artists to continue participating in one of the biggest community events in the region.

Parker Yobei, logistics committee chairman, yesterday disclosed that from \$150 last year, the artist's fee has been lowered to \$100

by the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

For food vendors, the agency has reduced the amount from \$650 to \$600 per station, an 8-percent cut on the previous festival fee.

This year's celebration will be held at the Susupe Civic Center from April 23 to 26.

Yobei said there are 100 booths and spaces available for the celebration, 20 of which are for artists and 80 for arts and crafts, vendors, and live educational demonstrations.

Besides lowering festival fees, DCCA also decided to stop the holding of the traditional booth competition, of which prizes rely on donations from businesses.

"We know that everybody is going through a tough time and we wanted to help... especially our artists because that's the purpose of this festival: to help them showcase their output. We wanted this festival to be more beneficial to the artists as much as possible," Yobei told *Saipan Tribune*.

He added: "This year, we

don't want to push it too hard on our businesses... which is why we will not hold the traditional booth contest."

However, he said DCCA will still conduct the float competition, with prizes of \$500 for first, \$300 for second, and \$200 for third prize.

As of yesterday, DCCA recorded 47 registered participants, with 30 artists; the rest are food vendors. The number is expected to go up before the end of the month, or the closing

of the registration period.

Yobei said the new festival fees are good for the four-day celebration, which expects to gather thousands of spectators from all over Micronesia.

Yobei added that DCCA will use all fees to pay for power, materials, stage setup, garbage, and restrooms.

This week, invitation will be sent by the committee to off-island delegates.

The four-day event draws thousands of spectators every year.

Man arrested for punching officer

An intoxicated man allegedly punched a police officer who tried to stop him from fighting with another man outside the Chicago Club in Garapan Saturday night.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Lei Ogomoro said that Ryan Reyes Agulto, 21, was arrested for assault and battery of a police officer, resisting arrest, criminal mischief, and disturbing the peace.

Ogomoro said police officers responded to Chicago Club on Saturday at 11:21pm after they received a call about a fight outside the club.

When the officers arrived at the location, they observed a crowd surrounding two men who were fighting on the sidewalk.

Officers dispersed the crowd and separated the two men, one of them identified as Agulto.

Agulto started shouting profanities, prompting police officers to tell him to calm down. Agulto became aggressive and started shouting at the officer's face. When the officer pushed Agulto away, the suspect allegedly punched the officer in the face.

Officers then took down Agulto, but he continued to resist. As he was placed inside the police car, the suspect allegedly kicked the rear passenger door.

Police learned that prior to the fight, Agulto had an argument with another man inside the club. Agulto and the man then later had a fight outside the club. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB09-CRM-049**

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 12, 2009 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL FOR THE COASTAL
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT - TINIAN BRANCH"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A) - (D)

/s/ JOHN B. JOYNER, PH.D
DIRECTOR OF CRM

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB09-CRM-050**

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 12, 2009 • TIME: 10:30 A.M.

**"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL FOR THE COASTAL
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT - ROTA BRANCH"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

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/s/ JOHN B. JOYNER, PH.D
DIRECTOR OF CRM

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

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PUBLIC NOTICE
March 3, 2009

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Board of Directors of the Commonwealth Development Authority thru its Chairman, hereby informs the general public that the CDA Board of Directors will hold its Regular Meeting on Thursday, March 5, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the CDA Conference Room, Second Floor, Wakin's Building, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Saipan. The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Minutes

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. REPORTS
1. Financial Report-CDA
2. Legal Counsel's Report
a. FY 2006 & 2007 Audit Reports

IV. DIVISIONS/COMMITTEES
1. Development Corporation Division (DCD)
a. Loan and Borrower's Requests
b. Foreclosed Properties - Proposals
2. DBD/Public Finance Committee
a. CPA-CDA Loan

V. OLD BUSINESS
1. SBDC/Business Incubator
3. Economic Restoration Summit
2. Credit Union

VI. NEW BUSINESS
1. Agricultural Summit
2. Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies (APAFS) Membership

VII. OTHER MATTERS
1. Update on CDA Presentation to the Legislature
2. Senate Bill 16-50

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-4 1, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session)

/s/ PEDRO L. ITIBUS
Chairman, CDA Board of Directors

Broadcast License Assignment

On February 13, 2009 an application was filed with the FCC to assign the license of stations KCNM(AM), 1080 KHz, Saipan, KCNM-FM, 101.1 MHz, Garapan-Saipan and KZMI(FM), 103.9 MHz, Garapan-Saipan from Inter-Island Communications, Inc to Choice Broadcasting Company, LLC.

The officers, directors and owners of the assignor are Edward H. Poppe, Frances W. Poppe, Edward H. Poppe III, Michelle Aguon, Matthew J. Poppe and Cheryl Kelly.

The managers and members of the assignee are Richard C. Yu, Jeselyn T. Yu and Robert F. Kelley, Jr.

A copy of the application, amendments and related materials are on file for public inspection at Inter-Island Communications Inc. Sablan Bldg San Jose Saipan.

Fund group drafts omnibus bill to address pension woes

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The newly formed NMIRF Working Group is drafting an omnibus bill to help stabilize the finances of the NMI Retirement Fund for future retirees and current pensioners.

"The idea is to combine a lot of the bills introduced instead of having piecemeal bills to address

Retirement Fund matters. Hopefully this bill can address financial and policy issues related to the Fund," working group first vice chair Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider told *Saipan Tribune*.

The group held its second meeting Wednesday last week, and will meet again tomorrow when the draft will be up for review.

Among the measures proposed in the Legislature are the

issuance of pension obligation bonds to help stabilize the Fund's financial health, and shielding the Fund from political tampering. Other piecemeal measures include prohibiting the Legislature from increasing benefits until all obligations of the Fund have been fully paid; limiting the class of people able to double dip; allowing the Fund to file for bankruptcy; and ceasing all dis-

ability benefits and a soft freeze on benefits accrual at 20 years.

The working group currently has 13 members led by chair Rep. Ray N. Yumul, and six technical, statistics and legal support staff.

The other members are Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider, first vice chairman; Commonwealth Development Authority executive director Oscar C. Camacho, second vice chairman; Fund

board of trustees chair Juan T. Guerrero; NMIRF board member Sixto K. Igisomar; Teresa Kim and press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. of the Executive Branch; Sen. Joseph Mendiola; Rep. Ralph DLG. Torres; Lilian M. Pangelinan of the Department of Commerce; Kelly M. Butcher of the Public School System; and retirees Rose L. Igitol and Ron Barrineau.

The Retirement Fund earlier said pension program may be wiped out in three to five years if the government's \$209 million debt remains unpaid and the global financial crisis continues.

In fiscal year 2007, the Fund spent \$76.894 million, including over \$51 million in pensions; \$5 million to survivors of retirees; \$1.9 million in disability benefits and \$4.451 in administrative costs.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Chamber meeting tomorrow

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will be holding its regular general membership meeting tomorrow, March 4, 2009, at Palms Resort, with Bruce Megarr of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. as guest speaker.

Megarr will speak with Chamber members about the stipulated order entered into with the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regarding water and wastewater. Members will hear about what the orders require and what the business community can look forward to with respect to drinking water, wastewater, and potential rate impact.

Registration and lunch will begin at 11:30am, and the meeting will begin at noon. As usual, the meeting is \$15 for members, \$20 for guests of members, and \$25 for general public. (SCC)

Live fire training on Farallon

The Emergency Management Office and U.S. Naval Forces Marianas Guam said that the U.S. military would be conducting live fire releases (13 EBS/VFA-27/HSC-25/90EFS) on the island of Farallon de Mendenilla on March 2-5, 2009, from 8am to 10pm.

The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla training area (R7201) on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

Due to the danger imposed by this activity, EMO is strongly advising the general public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—to stay away from this area during the time and date indicated.

For more information, contact the EMO Operations Section at telephone numbers 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0. (EMO)

Marianas High School schedule

Mar. 5: 3rd Quarter Mid Progress Report distribution to students

Mar. 14: Saipan Chamber of Commerce, "I'm Almost Graduating, What Now?" workshop, 8am-2pm MHS cafeteria (open to Juniors and Seniors; 50 slots available). See MHS Counselor for more information

Mar. 24: No classes (Commonwealth Covenant Day)

For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206

SSHS mid-progress reports out

To all parents and legal guardians of Saipan Southern High School students: Mid-progress reports are scheduled to be picked up on Thursday, March 5, 2009, from 4pm to 7pm. Teachers will be available in their classrooms for parents, legal guardian visit. All students will be released at 1pm. Please join us. (PR)

NASW Guam Chapter sets Social Work Month Activities

The National Association of Social Workers Guam Chapter announced that a proclamation signing for the 2009 Social Work Month will be held 11am Wednesday, March 4, at the Governor's Conference Room at Adelup.

The theme for this year is

"Resistance, Resilience and Change." Activities will be held throughout the month, culminating with a regional training conference March 25-26 at Guam Marriott Resort & Spa. The annual Awards Banquet will be held 6pm March 27.

For event information, contact Marlene Ongesei at 727-7908, or via email at naswgu@gmail.com. (PR)

Oleai Elementary School PTSA meeting

The PTSA Officers of Oleai Elementary School would like to inform the parents and guardians of Oleai Elementary School students that there will be a PTSA meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2009, 6:15pm in the school cafeteria. Everyone is encouraged to attend. (PR)

United States Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands Council on Developmental Disabilities



Bldg. 1312 Capitol Hill P.O. BOX 502564 Saipan, MP 96950

Tel: (670) 664-7000 Fax: (670) 664-7030

Email: p.sablan@cnmicdd.org

Website: www.cnmicdd.org



Notification of Meeting

Public Law No. 16-28, an Act "To establish a Commonwealth Autism Commission to develop a state plan to guide services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders; and for other purposes" identifies the following:

§ 102 Membership.

- (a) The Commission shall consist of fifteen (15) members as follows:
 - (1) The Chair of the Standing Committee on Health, Education, and Welfare for the Commonwealth House of Representative, or his designee;
 - (2) The Chair of the Standing Committee on Health, Education, and Welfare for the Commonwealth Senate, or his designee;
 - (3) The Special Education Coordinator of the Public School System (PSS), or another appropriate representative appointed by the PSS Commissioner;
 - (4) The Director of the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at the Northern Marianas College (NMC), or another appropriate appointed by the NMC President;
 - (5) One (1) representative from the Board of Pediatrics at the Commonwealth Health Center, to be appointed by the Secretary of Public Health;
 - (6) The Executive Director of the Council for Developmental Disabilities (CDD), or another appropriated representative appointed by The Council;
 - (7) The Executive Director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), or another representative appointed by the OVR Board;
 - (8) One (1) representative from the Family Court, to be appointed by the Presiding Judge of the Supreme Court;
 - (9) The Department of Public Safety Commissioner, or his designee;
 - (10) The Executive Director of the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy System, Inc. (NMPASI), or another appropriate designee appointed by the NMPASI Board;
 - (11) Two (2) representative from the nonprofit and chartered Autism Society of the CNMI, to be elected by the Autism Society member; and
 - (12) Three (3) individual stakeholders who are not members of the Autism Society of the CNMI, who shall be jointly appointed by the Speaker of the House and the President for the Senate, in consultation with the Executive Director for the Council for Developmental Disabilities. Two (2) of these individuals shall be a parent, relative, or other caregiver of an individual with autism; one (1) of these individuals shall be a person over the age of 21 years who has been diagnosed with autism.
- (b) The Chair of the Commission shall be one of the Commission members identified in § 102 (a)(11) and § 102 (a)(12) of this Act, and shall be elected by a majority of the Commission members present and voting. The Chair shall schedule and preside over meetings of the Commission.

This is a notification of meeting for Commission members identified in § 102 (a)(1) through § 102 (a)(12) to elect a Chairperson to head the Commonwealth Autism Commission. The meeting will be held on March 5, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. at the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities conference room located at 1312 Anatahan Drive, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

For more information, please call 664-7000.

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MARCH 3-8, 2009

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HEALTH CORNER

Want to know the secret to no cavities?

Education in the care of baby teeth

By DR. CRYSTAL EDMISTER
D.D.S.
SAIPAN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CLINIC

"Why do my child's teeth have so many cavities?"

In my years of dental practice this is probably one of the questions I get asked the most. It is usually followed by "I brush my child's teeth at least twice a day and I don't let them eat many sweets." For years the dental profession has focused on what

are traditionally considered the two most important factors that cause tooth decay:

- Poor oral hygiene
- Sweet sticky foods

Early in my practice I concluded that there was another important factor that was not being emphasized. After reviewing some research done by Dr.'s R. Steinman and J. Leonora in the 1960s, it occurred to me that maybe the missing factor was the frequency of eat-

ing and drinking. With this idea in mind, I began to tell my patients parents to put their children on an eating schedule. This schedule is designed so that the child has three hours between eating times, when he or she is not allowed any food or drink except pure water.

'The secret to not getting cavities'

This is not easy for parents to do! The children are accus-

tomed to having frequent drinks of juice, milk, soda, snacks, etc. and they like it. Also, food and/or drink seem to be one of the easiest ways to soothe a fussy or upset child. However, when the parents actually follow the new meal plan, the results are dramatic. The tooth decay literally stops. I am now convinced that this is the most important way to prevent early childhood decay.

In my practice I have seen children who are allowed to have cavity producing foods (sticky sweets and soda) at mealtime only, with no increase of tooth decay. On the other hand, I have seen children with good oral hygiene who eat healthy snacks and drinks like fruit, vegetables, milk, unsweetened drinks on a continual basis throughout the day, end up with severe extensive tooth decay. Finally, I have seen children from homes with limited food, who are fed only two or three times per day and seldom brush their teeth yet have little or no tooth decay.

If you would like to spare your child from the painful and unattractive early childhood tooth decay, I recommend following this simple schedule:

BREAKFAST

Feed your child healthy, unprocessed foods

Three hours between breakfast and lunch: Only water allowed

LUNCH

Eating and drinking time with natural, unprocessed foods

Three hours between lunch and dinner: Only water allowed

DINNER

Eating and drinking time with healthy, unprocessed foods

Two and a half hours between dinner and bedtime snack, if necessary: Only water allowed

BEDTIME SNACK, IF NECESSARY

Small healthy snack

Only pure water in bottle (for children under 1 year of age) or sippy cup at night

The take home message is that your children's teeth (this also applies to adults' teeth!) need a rest from always being surrounded by food. Teeth need three hours in the morning after breakfast and three more hours in the afternoon where nothing but water is drunk. This time will help teeth rebuild themselves so they are stronger to resist cavities. Give your kids the free gift of a healthy, beautiful smile by not letting them snack! So there's the secret! It's out of the bag so start putting it to use today knowing that you're doing the best thing for your child.

Dr. Crystal Edmister D.D.S. is a dental hygienist at the Seventh Day Adventist Dental Clinic.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Crystal Edmister D.D.S. poses with Seventh Day Adventist Clinic staff and a patient.



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands State Rehabilitation Council

PO Box 501521 Saipan, MP 96950, TEL.: (670)322-6537 FAX: (670)322-6536
TTY (670) 322-6449 EMAIL: voc.rehab@saipan.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC §9910, the State Rehabilitation Council will hold its FY 09 2nd General Membership on Friday March 6, 2009 at the Azucena Room, Fiesta Resort and Spa at 9:00am-2:00pm. Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

- I. Meeting Call to Order
- II. Welcome and recognition of new appointed members
- III. Review and adoption of Agenda
- IV. Review and adoption of the FY'09 1st Meeting Minutes (12/19/08)
- V. Reports
 - a. OVR Director
 - b. SRC Chair
- VI. Old Business
 - a. FY 2010 State Plan Updates and Schedule of Public Forums for Saipan, Tinian, & Rota
 - b. Appointments/re-appointments of Committee Chairpersons
 - c. SRC On-Line Training Modules
 - d. Pending Vacancy Appointments
- VII. New Business
 - a. Review and Adoption of Policies for VR services
 - b. OVR/IL Share of Stimulus Package: Recovery Guidelines/Requirements & Accountability of the DSU/Stakeholders
- VIII. Consumer Forum
- IX. Announcements
- X. Adjournment

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend the meeting but require accommodations such as large print or sign language interpreters, are asked to call 322-6537(voice) or 322-6449(TTY). Please contact Magin Iginoef (Council Liaison) two days in advanced for necessary arrangements.

Publication of this notice is paid for by federal funds made possible by the United States Department of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 3, 1999

Reforms to continue

After meeting with key members of the U.S. Congress in Washington D.C., the CNMI legislature is hoping to continue with reform measures to deal with concerns on local labor and immigration in an attempt to block a federal takeover proposal. Senate President Paul Manglona yesterday expressed optimism over the support of some U.S. lawmakers sympathetic to the conditions in the Northern Marianas, saying the meeting was a success. The CNMI delegation, led by Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio who visited the Congress last week, provided updates on the labor and immigration reforms, the first since attending the oversight hearing by the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in March last year.

CDA: Marubeni deal needs safety net

The Commonwealth Development Authority has prodded the utilities company to include a refinancing clause in the future power plant construction contract with a Japanese conglomerate in order to ensure that power rates are maintained at the lowest possible level. CDA Board Chairman Juan S. Tenorio explained inserting such provision would give room to Marubeni Corp. and its US partner, Sithe Energies, Inc., to seek refinancing in the event the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation fails to meet its obligation to the power provider. Such flexibility, he said, would avoid possible sudden rise in power rates on Saipan.

March 3, 2000

Principal suspect in rape-slay freed

Thirty-six-year-old Asterio F. Bajo walked to freedom yesterday afternoon after spending 10 days in jail in connection with charges that he raped and murdered a waitress at Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino. The Superior Court ordered the release of Bajo following the recommendation by Kevin Lynch, chief of the Criminal Division of the Attorney General's Office. In his motion, Lynch said the CNMI government does not intend to press criminal charges against Bajo as a result of additional investigation that has been performed. Sources said based on fresh information gathered by investigators, there were strong indications proving Bajo's innocence.

Acting AG says Villagomez is not yet off the hook

The Attorney General's Office yesterday contradicted earlier claims that Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Executive Director Timothy P. Villagomez had been cleared of allegations linking him to bribery on the controversial Saipan power project. Testifying before the Senate Executive Appointments and Governmental Investigations Committee, acting Attorney General Herbert Soll and Alfred W. Teregeyo from the AGO's investigation unit disclosed that the initial probe conducted on the charges has yet been closed. Mr. Soll told the eight-man panel that his office is awaiting result of a separate investigation being carried out by the Office of the Public Auditor to complete its findings on the accusations leveled against Mr. Villagomez by his ex-wife.

March 3, 2003

Business leader slams bloated bureaucracy

The Commonwealth has been trapped in a vicious economic cycle of rise and fall, mainly because the government has consistently failed to address the problems roots: Bloated bureaucracy. This, according to businessman and former Saipan of Chamber president Joe C. Ayuyu, has aggravated the adverse impacts of outside economic forces on the local business environment, which has been on the downside for the last five years. Ayuyu said recent efforts initiated by the private sector-mainly by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce-is gearing towards the right direction but added that the government must play an active and crucial role in spelling its success.

Separate regulatory body recommended

Board of Regents Chairman Vince Seman agreed that the BoR's licensing authority governing private institutions seeking to establish postsecondary institutions in the CNMI is "overwhelming" in addition to the Regents' major role in running the Northern Marianas College. The BoR chief, during the NMC's Pacific Gateway presentation at the House Wednesday, has recommended that the Legislature set up a separate entity that will regulate private entities applying for licenses to offer college-level programs in the CNMI. The BoR, the lone public college's policy-making body, is also the state postsecondary licensing authority.

Soil & Water Conservation Workshop & Sweet Potato Tasting



March 4, 2009
8:30am - 4:30pm

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This workshop is conducted to further the Cooperative Extensions Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914
In cooperation with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Educational programs are open to all, regardless of age, race, color, national origin, sex, religion or disability.

This program was funded by a CIG Grant #61-9251-6-726 from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Additional funding was provided by ADAP

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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AP The Associated Press

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EDITORIAL

Time for Iraq

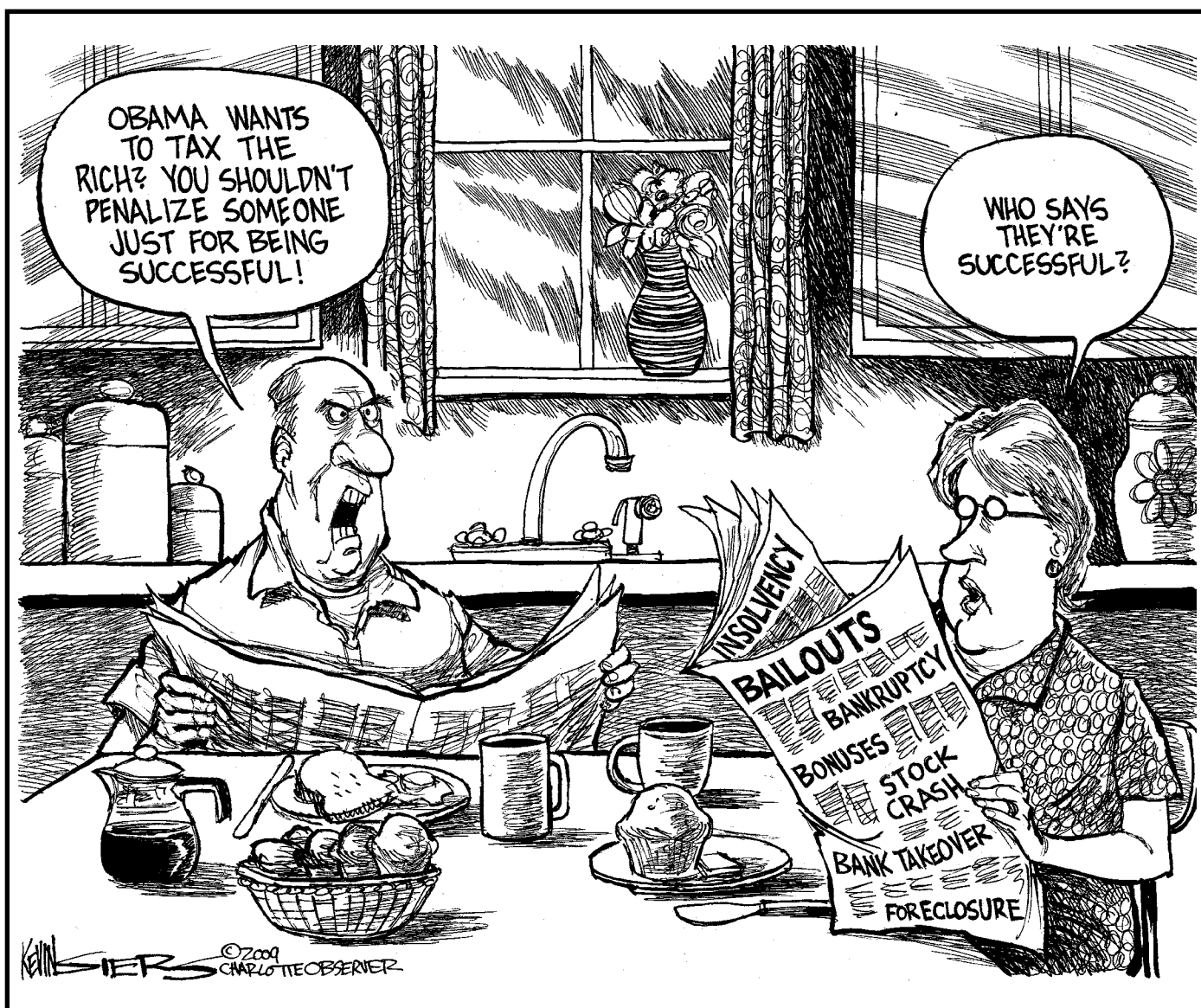
The Iraq strategy that President Obama announced Friday was broadly faithful to his campaign promises, but it contained some important and praiseworthy adjustments. The president lengthened his 16-month timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. combat troops to 19 months, thus adopting the middle of the three options the Pentagon studied. He set a ceiling of 50,000 troops for the “residual” force he has always said would remain—a figure that quickly prompted sniping from his party’s left wing. He gave up his formula of withdrawing forces at the rate of a brigade a month, which will allow U.S. commanders to maintain a large force in the country through Iraq’s crucial parliamentary elections at the end of this year.

Most important, Obama spoke of Iraq not as a fiasco to be abandoned but as a “great nation” whose “future ... is inseparable from the future of the broader Middle East.” He said his administration aimed for “a new era of American leadership and engagement” in the region and “will work to promote an Iraqi government that is just, representative and accountable, and that provides neither support nor safe haven to terrorists.” That is almost exactly how the Bush administration defined “victory” in Iraq. Thanks to the military and political successes of Bush’s last two years, there is reason for hope that Obama’s strategy can achieve that aim.

The president’s speech was not without hedges and contradictions. He said there would be limits to what the United States would do to stabilize Iraq, and he put Iraqis on notice that they must “seize” the opportunity they have been offered. Perhaps with his antiwar base in mind, he pronounced “as plainly as I can: By August 31, 2010, our combat mission in Iraq will end.” In the next breath, he promised to “proceed carefully” and “consult closely” with military commanders and the Iraqi government, and he said “there will surely be difficult periods and tactical adjustments.” Does that mean Obama is open to altering his plan if al-Qaeda or Iranian-backed militias rebound as U.S. troop levels decline? Some of the congressional leaders he briefed, including Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., seemed to think so; McCain called Obama’s plan “reasonable.”

Unfortunately for Obama, the initial response of some congressional Democrats was anything but reasonable. A number objected to the size of the residual force: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., declared that 15,000 or 20,000 would be more appropriate. Neither she nor other objectors explained why fewer troops were needed or expressed any interest in nurturing what Obama described as the “renewed cause for hope in Iraq.” That is a measure of Obama’s statesmanship: Though he opposed the war, his strategy recognizes what has been achieved in Iraq, even at a terrible cost, and aims at preserving it. His party would do well to follow his lead.

(c) 2009, The Washington Post



Wild Wild Web

The guy who wrote that the American frontier closed more than 100 years ago—he’s a five-star moron. The frontier’s still wide open. We just changed its name to the Internet.

Maybe the most freewheeling territory in cyberspace is consumer-review Web sites such as Yelp, where customers rate sushi joints and endodontists and churches.

Sometimes they post assessments as dry and sober as a temperance newsletter. Sometimes they try to channel Jonathan Gold, like the laconic diner who wrote of my favorite pizza hangout, “It’s good pizza ... don’t expect to be born again or anything.” And sometimes they bring knives and guns. A foodie slagged the chef at an Italian restaurant in Vegas as a “ghetto guide.”

The push-back was inevitable. A recent nudge came from the San Francisco Bay Area. On Yelp, a man detailed a billing dispute with his chiropractor, then concluded that he’d found a “better, honest chiropractor.” His first chiropractor asked the patient to remove the review for “unjustly” characterizing him as “unethical and dishonest.” The patient refused, the chiropractor got a lawyer, the patient did take down the post, but the chiropractor sued anyway.

Since then, a Bay Area dentist sued a couple over their Yelp slam of her treatment of their son. This time, Yelp itself took down the post. On the East Coast, drugmakers in an investor lawsuit want to bar comments on a site called CafePharma. The site, so the lawyers say, is “literally the cyberspace equivalent of scrawls left on a men’s-room wall.”

Here’s the deal with the Wild West frontier, then and now: You’re on your own. No sheriff, no “big media” filter to protect you, not even from yourself.

The Communications Decency Act of 1996 effectively took most Web site operators off the hook. The act says Web sites aren’t publishers and are not responsible for what people put on their sites, which is why the chiropractor didn’t sue Yelp.

Thomas R. Burke is a First Amendment lawyer in San Francisco. “People routinely write comments online that they’d never dare say in person,” he said, “but that doesn’t make them any less protected under the First Amendment. Expressions of opinion are protected, and, ironically, the more ‘over the top’ the comment, the more it may be protected as opinion.”

Opinion is free speech, but there are legal limits even to that, and not just shouting “fire” in a theater that isn’t aflame. It may have been “the worst meal” you ever had—but post, “This restaurant is so bad, I know it’s a front for criminal money-laundering,” and that’s heading toward libel (unless it’s true), and you may hear from a lawyer.

By PATT MORRISON

(c) 2009, Los Angeles Times

Morrison is a Los Angeles Times columnist and host of a daily public-affairs show on Los Angeles public radio. Morrison’s e-mail address is patt.morrison@latimes.com.



The waters just got deeper. The grass-roots consumer-rating operation the Zagat Survey has agreed to work with insurer WellPoint Inc. to let consumers rate doctors.

Dr. Dev GnanaDev loves Zagat—wouldn’t dine without it—but as head of the California Medical Association, he thinks it’s a terrible way to evaluate doctors. “It’s basically a complaint form,” not an informed analysis of care, he said. And if it’s driven by vox populi on medical peripherals—how old the waiting-room magazines are or how good the parking is—you could wind up not with the best physician but with “American Idol, M.D.”

The chiropractor-versus-reviewer lawsuit was settled out of court, which is a shame because we need public precedents to give us a legal compass on all this. Andrew Keen’s “The Cult of the Amateur” made him the scold of cyberspace culture. Said Keen: “I think it’s very healthy that this person is being sued. I think people have to be accountable, and the Internet is where most people think they can say anything and not be accountable or responsible.” To enforce accountability, there is “no other alternative apart from the law courts.”

As that implies, Keen is in favor of a substantive remedy. Shouldn’t the Internet self-correct before government big-footers step on freebooters’ cyberspace? I asked meekly. Keen bristled: “I don’t see anything wrong with regulation. We have regulation in other avenues of society.”

“The Internet is just another kind of society, and societies all operate under rights and responsibilities; Internet people operate purely on the basis of rights without responsibility.”

Take away the anonymity of the Internet, he says, and “a lot of the other problems would fall into place.”

So maybe I should take back that thing I said about Frederick Jackson Turner being a moron for saying the frontier is gone. Maybe even the cyberspace version will disappear.

But I don’t have to give up my dream of being a tough, edgy Internet poster yet. “Paper Shredder”—it’s a persona that’s everything I’ve always wanted to be: bold, slashing—and anonymous.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Free the memos

On his second day in office, President Barack Obama directed all of his administration's employees to work toward "an unprecedented level of openness," explaining that transparency would "strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in government."

Now the president can begin to make good on his promise of transparency by releasing the dozens of still-secret legal memos written by the Bush administration's Office of Legal Counsel.

The Office of Legal Counsel, which is part of the Justice Department, provides authoritative legal opinions to the president and executive branch agencies. It tells the president what the law allows and, more important, what the law prohibits.

Dawn Johnsen, whom Obama has nominated to lead the once-obscure office and whose confirmation hearing was held Wednesday, wrote in a 2007 law review article that the office must be "prepared to say no to the president." But under President Bush, the office played a very different role: Its senior lawyers served not as sources of bona fide legal guidance but as knowing facilitators of the president's lawless conduct.

Office of Legal Counsel lawyers told Bush, for instance, that the Fourth Amendment's protection against unreasonable searches and seizures did not apply to military operations inside the United States. They also created a legal argument to justify the National Security Agency's warrantless wiretapping program. And they produced memos that permitted the CIA to subject prisoners to waterboarding and other barbaric interrogation methods that the United States had in the past prosecuted as war crimes.

Lawyers for the office—including John Yoo, Steven Bradbury and Jay Bybee—churned out dozens of memos on torture, rendition, detention without charge and wiretapping without warrants. Many of their positions were founded on a conception of unbounded executive power previously articulated most succinctly by President Nixon: "When the president does it, that means it's not illegal." The memos simply ignored the Supreme Court deci-

sions that rejected this theory.

Worse yet, some of the memos were plainly intended to insulate Bush administration officials from criminal liability. Jack Goldsmith, who as head of the Office of Legal Counsel felt compelled to withdraw some of the most extreme memos written by Yoo and others, has charged that the torture memos in particular, "in their redundant and one-sided effort to eliminate any hurdles posed by the torture law . . . could be interpreted as if they were designed to confer immunity for bad acts."

And, according to the Washington Post and other sources, a yet-to-be-released ethics report by the Justice Department's Office of Professional Responsibility confirms that lawyers in the Office of Legal Counsel intentionally misrepresented or distorted the law to support the Bush administration's policy goals.

How do we know what the Office of Legal Counsel was doing if the documents are still secret? Two of the memos have been released as a result of lawsuits filed by the ACLU and its partners; many other memos have been described in the government's legal papers. And a few have been leaked to the media—including, most notably, the memo that defined torture to encompass only those methods that inflict the kind of pain associated with organ failure or death.

But in general the Bush administration was remarkably successful at shielding the office's work from the public. The documents most crucial to the historical record—including many of the memos used to justify the administration's most radical policies—are still being withheld. The result is that the public lacks access to basic information about how the Bush administration's national security policies were developed, who participated in their development and what legal arguments were generated to support them.

The Bush administration contended in court that the memos are protected by the attorney-client privilege or that they can't be released without compromising the nation's security. Historically, though, many of the office's memos have been published as a matter of course. And it is not clear how national security would be harmed

By JAMEEL JAFFER

Special to the Los Angeles Times

Jaffer, director of the National Security Project of the American Civil Liberties Union, is the author, with Amrit Singh, of Administration of Torture: A Documentary Record from Washington to Abu Ghraib and Beyond.



by releasing, for example, legal analyses of interrogation methods that are unlawful now and that were unlawful when they were used.

Given what we know about the policies the memos supported, it's difficult to escape the conclusion that the memos were withheld by the Bush administration for purely political reasons—to shield indefensible legal arguments from public scrutiny and to shield public officials from accountability.

At her confirmation hearing, Johnsen said she would urge that the still-secret memos be reviewed for release, but that they might be redacted or even withheld entirely for reasons of national security.

Limited redactions may be necessary in extraordinary cases, but national security should not be used as a pretext for the wholesale suppression of the memos. And there are good reasons to release the memos now. By releasing them, the Obama administration would signal that it truly intends to end an era in which the Justice Department became shamefully complicit in the most egregious crimes. Equally important, it would allow the public to better understand the policies that defined the Bush administration and shaped history, and to understand the role that the Office of Legal Counsel played in developing, justifying and advocating those policies.

In dozens of legal briefs, the Bush administration was never able to articulate a persuasive reason for withholding the memos from the public. The memos should have been released long ago, and the Obama administration should not delay in releasing them now.

Our science fictions

Nobody likes science. You can tell by the fact that they teach it in school. There aren't any high school courses in pizza.

I don't like science either. I mean, it sounds good when you're a kid with the fingerprint kits and the baking-powder volcanoes, but by 10th grade, you realize it's just math with special effects.

But for some reason, only conservatives get blamed for hating science. Which is weird, because conservatives are, by definition, the ones who are supposed to hate strange new things. They hate foreigners, video games, rap and—from what I could gather from Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal's speech Tuesday—talking to adults.

People on the far right don't believe in evolution, global warming or doing stem cell research. Most of their opposition is rooted in the fact that these ideas challenge the Bible, which is the oldest book they know. I'm guessing Greek conservatives are OK with killing

your dad and making love to your mom.

But since I moved to L.A., I've discovered that liberals hate science just as much as conservatives, and they talk about it a lot more. They'll reject any study that contradicts their Mother-Nature-is-perfect myth, which is oddly similar to the conservatives' thesis: Both sides think the past was purer than the technologically corrupted present. Except the liberal vision of the idealized past is a pre-insecticide, pastoral paradise where loving animals ran free and people had shameless sex. So, basically the same as the conservatives' version, plus untainted apples and some gay stuff.

Liberals have an irrational fear of inoculation and genetically engineered food, no matter how conclusive the science is on these topics. They believe that the body needs to be detoxified with foot pads, colonics, mud wraps and maple-syrup-and-cayenne-pepper fasts. They take echinacea and Emergen-C, heal themselves with crystals and magnets, and believe that energy flows through differ-

By JOEL STEIN

Special to the Los Angeles Times

Stein is a columnist for the Times. E-mail Stein at jstein@latimescolumnists.com.



ent "centers" of their bodies. They practice, I swear, a form of healing massage called reiki in which the masseuse usually doesn't even touch you. I believe my wife and I have a reiki marriage.

They suspect modern medicine is part of a corporate conspiracy, while dangerous recreational drugs are OK because they come from stuff that grows in the ground, man. These are people who will feel virtuous about drinking Kool-Aid as long as the bottle has the words "vitamin water" on it.

I've been in rooms where a normal discussion of organic versus local food suddenly turned into an engineering analysis of how the Twin Towers could no way have fallen just because two giant jets hit them. That's the part of the conversation when I suggest we run an experiment in which we see what happens when two giant jets hit the two idiots talking.

Facts are weak things when they face personal philosophies. It's scary to let go of your assumptions of how the world works, to be left with only a set of incomplete, seemingly unconnected data points. It is far easier to ignore or dispute a study from Princeton's physics department than to readjust your core beliefs about where the universe came from. Especially when the Princeton study is impossible to read and Genesis tells two awesome, different stories.

And science is vulnerable to being disputed, because, as Nietzsche posited in "Human, All Too Human," we've mistakenly elevated it to another form of salvation, so it's just a watered-down religion: "Modern science has as its goal: as little pain as possible, as long life as possible—thus a kind of eternal bliss." An eternal bliss that is full of hanging out in a lab and never meeting girls, so really more eternal than bliss.

Maybe the best we can do is join in a bipartisan agreement to engage only in the harmless type of science-hating everyone can love: UFOs, psychics and underwater kingdoms that appear on Google maps.

Sure, the right's aliens are anal-probing, cattle-vaporizing invaders, and the left's are giant-headed, soil-sampling messengers of peace, but there's room for compromise. Maybe, for instance, we keep the anal probing but flick on some didgeridoo music, throw in some scented oils and call it detox. If nothing else, those rules would keep any sane alien from landing here.

Letters to the Editor

To all registered voters

The general election is fast approaching and I am sure there are many who are undecided whom to vote for. Let me say it this way: Do not hesitate to vote for the right person as that person will make great changes to our future. It is really sad to know that when it comes to voting, it's really a conflict, especially with family relationships when they do not get along. There should be understanding, love, trust and caring. These are the things you have to keep in mind so that it will not affect you or your family. Just remember that by working together, we can. If you feel you have confidence in those individuals who are willing to give up their time to serve, then go for them. Be decisive when making your choice so that it will lead you to the right path and that path is a brighter future for yourself and your family. I admire candidates who are going to be a great example to each and everyone of the community in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Please let us all be in this together as one so that the CNMI can be easily managed by our future leaders and the rest of our public servants. I extend my sincere gratitude to the candidates who choose to represent our islands and help each other for the betterment of the CNMI.

Un Dangkulu na si yu 'us ma 'ase' pot i tiempon miyu!

Abigail Manglona
Guam

Isn't it time?

On Feb. 14 and again on the 16th, Judge Govendo cited that the "Retirement Fund issue is a Commonwealth problem." I agree 100 percent that it is a problem. It's been on the paper saying that in three to five years, the Fund will run out of money. For as long as the government does not put in its share, the Fund will be broke by then. I too agree with Judge Govendo that the Legislature should be involved.

To all active members and retirees, are you not concerned about your investment, the deductions from your hard earned cash? If you are, then let's organize ourselves and form an "Active and Retirees Association of the CNMI" to include our neighbor islands of Rota and Tinian. Why is it important to have an organization? Because as an organization and as members of the Retirement Fund program, our concerns can be heard, we will know exactly what is going on with the program, we can have a voice in determining who can representing our interest on the board and not just their own. I believe that board members should be anybody who is a contributing member to the Fund.






So to all active members (4,000 strong) and retirees (over 2,500 strong), let's organize and let them hear our concerns. Let's have a voice in the Board. After all, as members (both active and retirees), we own a majority of the funds. Members have been contributing for years and yet, no one really represents us when it comes to our interest. To all who believe, that we should organize and create an Active and Retirees Association, please email me at joe.m.palacios@gmail.com.

Joseph M. Palacios
Dandan, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

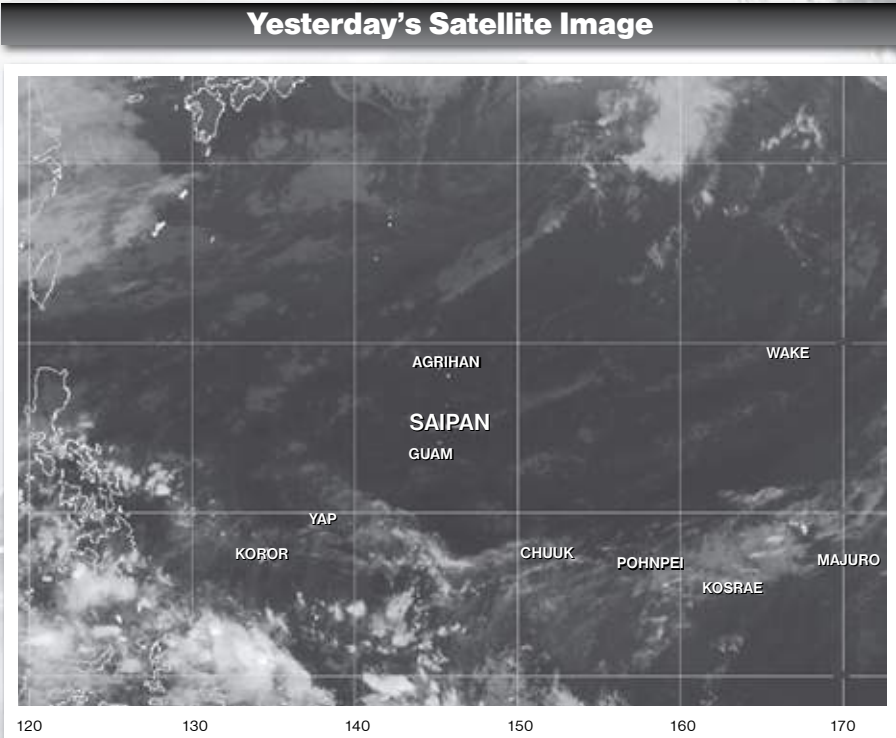
5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°

Micronesia		
Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲83 ▼75
Palau	Showers	▲89 ▼77
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲86 ▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88 ▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86 ▼75
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲89 ▼76
Majuro	Showers	▲83 ▼77

Around The Globe		
Auckland	Showers	▲72 ▼57
Beijing	Cloudy	▲45 ▼30
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲77 ▼68
Honolulu	Showers	▲74 ▼68
London	Showers	▲48 ▼45
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲67 ▼54
Manila	Showers	▲86 ▼75
Melbourne	Showers	▲73 ▼57
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲70 ▼54
New York	Cloudy	▲28 ▼18
Osaka	Showers	▲47 ▼42
Paris	Sunny	▲46 ▼38
Pusan	Rain	▲53 ▼44
Rome	Showers	▲56 ▼52
Salem	Showers	▲50 ▼33
San Francisco	Rain	▲58 ▼46
Seoul	Showers	▲48 ▼32
Tokyo	Showers	▲48 ▼41
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲36 ▼22

Tides		
Saipan Harbor		
12:14 AM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
5:26 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
11:01 AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
6:36 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough extends northwestward from EQ145E to 4N140E. Convergence near and to the east of the trough is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms southeast of Yap and Koror between the equator and 4N from 142E to 150E. Another surface trough extends northeastward from 1N161E to 13N170E then northward to end at a circulation centered beyond 25N at 172E. Scattered showers can be found over Kosrae and Majuro or within 100 miles of a line extending northeastward from 3N160E to 8N172E and east of a line extending northward from 5N176E to 20N177E.

Sunrise/Sunset			Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	6:33 AM	6:25 PM	Today	10:34 AM	
Wednesday	6:32 AM	6:25 PM	Wednesday	11:30 AM	12:02 AM
Thursday	6:32 AM	6:25 PM	Thursday	12:31 PM	1:05 AM
Friday	6:31 AM	6:26 PM	Friday	1:35 PM	2:06 AM
Saturday	6:31 AM	6:26 PM	Saturday	2:35 PM	3:04 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

■ **CAMPUS BULLETIN**
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan

To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2009				
DEPARTURES			ARRIVALS	
Saipan-Rota			Rota-Saipan	
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm 1,7	CO 9598	3:25am 4:00am 5,6
Saipan-Guam			Guam-Saipan	
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am Daily	CO 9316	2:30am 3:20am 1,2,3,4,7
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am Daily	CO9598	2:30am 4:00am 5,6 via Rota
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm 1,7 via Rota	CO9596	7:00am 7:50am Daily
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6	CO9600	10:20am 11:10am Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm Daily	CO9602	2:00pm 2:50pm Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm Daily	CO9604	5:00pm 5:50pm Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm Daily	CO9606	8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita			Narita-Saipan	
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am Daily	NW 076	10:15am 2:40pm Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm 2,3,4,5,6,7	NW 077	6:25pm 1:20am+1 2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm Daily	NW 100	8:45pm 1:10am+1 Daily
Guam-Narita			Narita-Guam	
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm Daily	NW 74	9:45am 2:20pm Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm Daily	NW 82	10:30am 3:10pm Daily
Saipan-Osaka			Osaka-Saipan	
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am 1,4,6	OZ 120	9:50pm 2:20am+1 3,5,7
NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm Daily	NW 084	10:40am 3:05pm Daily
Guam-Osaka			Osaka-Guam	
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm Daily	NW 80	10:30am 3:00pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			Nagoya-Saipan	
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am Daily	NW 077	9:00pm 1:20am+1 Daily
Guam-Nagoya			Nagoya-Guam	
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm Daily	NW 24	10:00am 2:30pm Daily
Saipan-Incheon			Incheon-Saipan	
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am 1	OZ 605	9:00am 2:20pm Daily
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7	OZ 603	7:40pm 1:00am+1 7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am 1,4,6 via Osaka	OZ 120	7:10pm 2:20am+1 3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm Daily	OZ 603	8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan			Busan-Saipan	
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am 1,4,5,7	OZ 607	9:00pm 2:10am+1 3,4,6,7
Saipan-Shanghai			Shanghai-Saipan	
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am 2,6	FM 843	7:15pm 1:50am+1 1,5
Rota-Guam			Guam-Rota	
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm 1,7	CO 9598	2:30am 3:00am 5,6
Guam-Palau			Palau-Guam	
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm 1,7	CO 954	2:30am 5:25am 1,2
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm 3,5	CO 892	2:35am 5:30am 4,6
Palau-Manila			Manila-Palau	
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm 3,5	CO 892	10:10pm 1:50am+1 3,5
Guam-Manila			Manila-Guam	
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm 3,5 via Koror	CO 892	10:10pm 5:30am+1 3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm Daily	CO 934	11:10pm 4:40am+1 Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am 1,2,4,6,7	PR 110	10:10pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			Manila-Nagoya	
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm Daily	NW 72	6:30am 11:05am Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			Hongkong-Incheon	
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm Daily	OZ 724	12:30am 4:50am Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm Daily	OZ 7183	12:45am 5:05am 1,4,6
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm 5,7	OZ 722	1:30pm 5:45pm Daily
Narita-Manila			Manila-Narita	
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm Daily	NW 2	7:45am 12:40pm Daily
Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)				

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily	Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
Guam-Rota				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily	FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily	FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily	FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily	FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

MHS celebrates diverse Pacific culture

Marianas High School held its 34th Annual Cultural Day Friday amid the presence of students from Japan's Seisa Gakuen/Aoba School.

The celebration was highlighted by the traditional booth competition and dance performances by different groups.

The freshman class wowed the crowd with their Chuukese-inspired booth decorated with native plants, fruits, and fauna. The sophomore class entered a Palauan-inspired booth, all decorated by features mostly found in Palauan culture. The junior

class, meanwhile, adopted the unique Marshallese tradition of cooking food underground, called "um." The senior class entered a Tahitian-inspired booth accessorized by island fruits and flowers on the sides.

Here are some pictures from the event:



Lina Manalili, center, and two other members of the sophomore class at Marianas High School pose for a photo after performing a Palauan cultural dance during MHS's Cultural Day on Friday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

'SAY JAZZ'

Members of MHS Productions pose backstage shortly before their debut jazz dance performance titled "Roaring '20s" Friday at Marianas High School's Cultural Day celebration.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



CULTURAL PRIDE

Members of the Chamorro Club at Marianas High School perform traditional dances to entertain the big crowd on campus Friday as part of the 2009 MHS Cultural Day festivities.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



MARSHALLESE JAIL

Three female students at Marianas High School wait to be "bailed out" by friends and classmates from the "Marshallese jail" Friday at the MHS Cultural Day festivities.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Japanese students sell bags, toys and other merchandise during the Marianas High School Cultural Day celebration on Friday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Two students at Marianas High School beat each other's jumping rope skills as part of MHS Cultural Day activities on Friday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Members of Marianas High Schools' Canoe Club sell lunch to raise funds during the school's Cultural Day festivities on Friday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Business

Decline in newspapers renews idea of nonprofits

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (AP)—As sharp revenue reductions put the future of many U.S. newspapers in doubt, one idea gaining attention is the conversion of newspapers into tax-exempt nonprofits supported by large endowments.

Although viewed by many as a long shot at best, such a radical change could be a savior for the industry and its vital role in a democracy.

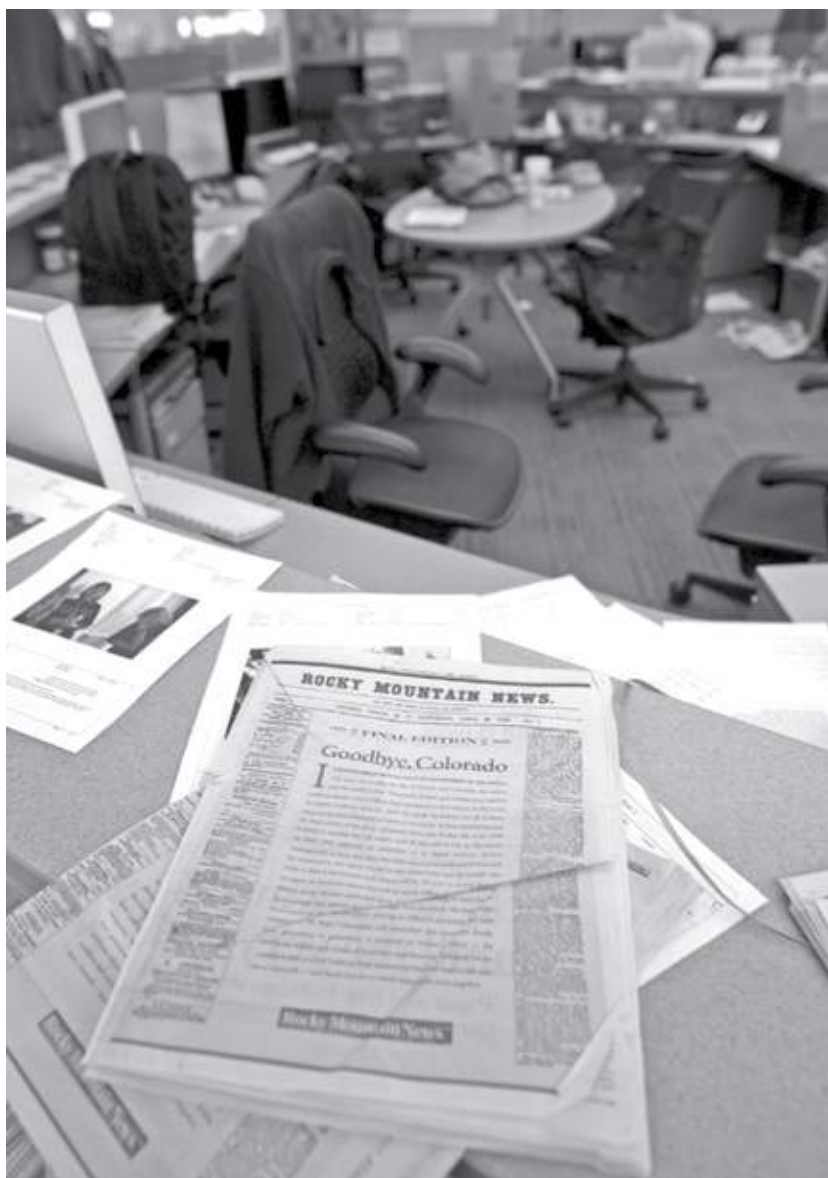
That's why the endowment model is drawing renewed attention as newspapers impose massive layoffs, scale back home delivery and make other drastic cuts to counter plunging advertising revenue amid a recession that has compounded struggles from the migration of readers to the Internet.

David Swensen, who managed one of the world's largest endowments as chief investment officer at Yale University, said endowments "would enhance newspapers' autonomy while shielding them from the economic forces that are now tearing them down."

"By endowing our most valued sources of news we would free them from the strictures of an obsolete business model and offer them a permanent place in society, like that of America's colleges and universities," he wrote in a recent opinion piece in *The New York Times*.

But first, the idea must overcome skepticism from the very newspapers that stand to benefit. Critics say endowments also could beholden newspapers to their large donors, and giving newspapers tax-exempt status could restrict them from endorsing candidates and running editorials on pending legislation.

On a more practical level, skeptics question whether the millions and millions of dollars needed to create such



A copy of the final edition of the Rocky Mountain News sits on a counter in the empty photo editing section in the newsroom in Denver on Friday, Feb. 27, 2009.

endowments could be raised during the worst recession in decades. Four newspaper companies, including the

owners of the Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, The Philadelphia Inquirer and the New Haven Register,

sought Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in recent months, while the Rocky Mountain News published its last edition Friday. Newspapers in Seattle and Tucson, Ariz., are threatened with closure if buyers aren't found, and the San Francisco Chronicle also faces closure or sale if it can't slash expenses.

Newspapers are having to rethink every aspect of their operations, including their for-profit existence, given their inability to generate enough revenue from their Web sites to offset the losses in print.

More nonprofits aimed at boosting investigative journalism are entering the field, including ProPublica and ventures started in the past few weeks at Boston University and the University of Wisconsin.

In 2007, recent casualties of newspaper downsizing in Minnesota formed Minnpost.com with \$850,000 donated by four families. The nonprofit also attracted support from more than 900 member donors and various foundations, including the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation headed by the former publisher of *The Miami Herald*.

Minnpost's mission: to produce the substantive local journalism its creators say has been on the decline because of industry cost-cutting.

But those projects are relatively small, and endowments are rare.

National Public Radio, whose endowment received a major gift of \$194 million from Joan B. Kroc in 2004, relies primarily on funding from member stations and corporate sponsors. Income from its endowment will generate just 6 percent of funds this fiscal year.

Creating an endowment to sustain an entire newspaper's operations will be tougher.

Asian stock markets tumble on worsening US slump

HONG KONG (AP)—Asian stocks tumbled Monday after the U.S. economy withered at its fastest pace in more than a quarter century, heightening doubts that the global economy can recover later this year. Japan's benchmark fell 4 percent.

As in the U.S. and Europe, investors across the region were shaken after figures Friday showed gross domestic product in the world's largest economy shrank at a 6.2 percent annual pace at the end of last year.

The decline, worse than most economists had expected, was the country's sharpest since 1982.

Adding to fears that the world economic crisis won't end anytime soon

were more troubling signs that banks may need still more capital to cope with crippling losses.

On Friday, Citigroup Inc. agreed to turn over a huge stake to the U.S. government. And European banking giant HSBC PLC is expected to unveil plans to raise 12 billion pounds (\$17 billion) in a new rights issue when it reports results later Monday.

Meanwhile, faltering insurer American International Group is expected to get another massive bailout.

"You're seeing the U.S. is sinking lower and lower, and we're still desperately searching for a bottom," said John Mar, co-head of sales trading at Daiwa

Securities SMBC Co. in Hong Kong. "It's death by a thousand cuts, a slow death right now."

Every major market in Asia convulsed with selling.

In Japan, the Nikkei 225 stock average dropped 300.99, or 4 percent, to 7,267.43.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng lost 490.53 points, or 3.8 percent, to 12,321.04, and South Korea's Kospi plummeted 4.1 percent to 1,019.74. Markets in Australia, Taiwan and Singapore shed about 3 percent or more.

Equities markets in the U.S. and Europe suffered a similar rout on Friday.

In New York, the Dow fell 119.15,

or 1.7 percent, to 7,062.93 - its lowest close since May 1, 1997.

The S&P 500 index fell 17.74, or 2.4 percent, to 735.09, and the Nasdaq composite index fell 13.63, or 1 percent, to 1,377.84.

With U.S. futures down, Wall Street was poised for more losses. Dow futures were down 89 points, or 1.3 percent, at 6,963 and S&P500 futures lost 10.7, or 1.5 percent, to 723.50.

Asian financial stocks were among the hardest hit. Leading Japanese bank Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group dived over 5 percent. In Hong Kong, shares of HSBC were suspended ahead of Monday's results and expected announcements.

Source: AIG to get up to \$30B more in Fed aid

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Struggling insurer American International Group Inc. will receive up to \$30 billion in additional federal assistance in the fourth government rescue of the company, a person familiar with the matter told *The Associated Press* on Sunday.

The new infusion is intended to prop up AIG—once the world's largest insurer—as it is expected to announce \$60 billion in quarterly losses early Monday, the source said on the condition of anonymity because the discussions are still ongoing.

The company, which is considered too large to fail, previously received about \$150 billion in loans from the government, which now has an 80 percent stake in the company.

Under the new deal, the U.S. Treasury and the Federal Reserve would provide about \$30 billion in fresh capital to AIG from the government's Troubled Assets Relief Program, or TARP. The money would be provided as a standby line of equity that AIG could tap as its losses mount, the source said. AIG has already received \$40 billion from TARP.

In exchange for the latest infusion, the Federal Reserve would take stakes in two international units, the source said.

Instead of paying back \$38 billion in cash with interest that it has used from a Federal Reserve credit line, AIG now will repay that amount with equity stakes Asia-based American International Assurance Co. and American Life Insurance Co., which operates in 50 countries.

Confusion a part of health care plan in stimulus

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Obama administration rushed to include a health care safety net for laid-off workers in the recently signed stimulus bill, but has not told employers exactly how to make it work.

As a result, tens of thousands of jobless people could wait months before getting help paying for health insurance that their employers previously had covered.

"Too many people are still trying to figure this out," said Heath Weems, director of human resources policy at the National Association of Manufacturers. "There is a lot of confusion."

At issue is the program called COBRA, the acronym for the law that allows workers to keep their company's health insurance plan for 18 months after they leave their job, if they pay the premiums.

The policies are so expensive that only a minority of eligible workers sign up, often those with medical conditions that demand attention. Costs for a family of four can top \$1,000 per month.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Flash memory company Spansion files for bankruptcy

SUNNYVALE, Calif. (AP)—Struggling flash memory maker Spansion Inc. and its U.S. subsidiaries filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection Sunday, in an effort to restructure \$625 million worth of debt as the company continues to explore a possible sale or other alternatives. The news comes a week after Spansion, one of the world's largest makers of chips used in digital cameras, cell phones and high-definition

televisions, said it would slash its global work force by 35 percent, or 3,000 employees. Demand for flash and chip-based memory is on the decline as sales of electronics which use Spansion's chips dip amid the weak global economy. Spansion said Sunday it decided to file for bankruptcy following consultation with a lender group holding the company's senior secured floating rate notes due in 2013. The company is in talks with the bondholder group about providing debtor-in-possession financing for its long-term cash needs.

Oil falls below \$44 on bleak US GDP, AIG news

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices fell to below \$44 a barrel Monday as hopes for a quick end to the global slump evaporated amid dismal U.S. economic news and the prospect of another massive bailout of ailing insurer American International Group Inc. Benchmark crude for April delivery fell \$1.08 to \$43.68 a barrel by midday in Singapore on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 46 cents on Friday to settle

at \$44.76. In another sign that the U.S. financial crisis continues to sap the government's coffers, AIG will receive up to \$30 billion in additional federal assistance, people familiar with the matter told *The Associated Press* on Sunday. The company previously received about \$150 billion in loans from the government, which holds an 80 percent stake. The Commerce Department said Friday that gross domestic product contracted 6.2 percent in the fourth quarter, the worst showing in a quarter-century.

Nation

Rare snow blankets South as East braces for storm

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)—A potent March snowstorm blanketed much of Alabama with up to 4 inches of snow Sunday, covering Civil War statues and forcing the cancellation of hundreds of church services.

The storm headed toward the Northeast and threatened to drop up to a foot of snow in the Philadelphia area, 13 inches in New York and 15 inches across southern New England late Sunday.

In Georgia, the snowfall made roads treacherous and delayed flights, while in Alabama, more than 210 churches in the central part of the Bible Belt state had to cancel morning services.

Vonda Braswell of Alabaster, Ala. was throwing snowballs in her front yard instead of putting on her Sunday best. "I think you can worship in this it's so rare," she said.

Up to 7 inches of snow was expected through Monday morning in areas of Maryland, northern Virginia and Washington, D.C., where Mayor Adrian Fenty declared a snow emergency.

In New York, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced more than 1,300 sanitation workers would spread salt and plow city streets to prepare for the snowfall.

"It's the first of March, which as you know is the month that



Todd Warren, visiting from Buffalo, N.Y., walks through the snow that hit Atlanta to his car after learning the 25th Annual Hunger Walk/Run event had been canceled because of the weather on Sunday, March 1, 2009.

we say comes in like a lion and out like a lamb," he said. "It's

pretty clear that the lions are getting ready to roar."

Mullen: Iran has fissile materials for A-bomb

WASHINGTON (AP)—The top U.S. military official said Sunday that Iran has sufficient fissile material for a nuclear weapon, declaring it would be a "very, very bad outcome" should Tehran move forward with a bomb.

Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, offered the assessment when questioned in a broadcast interview about a recent report by the U.N. nuclear watchdog on the state of Iran's uranium enrichment program, which can create nuclear fuel and may be sufficiently advanced to produce the core of warheads.

Mullen was asked if Iran now had enough fissile material to make a bomb. He responded, "We think they do, quite frankly. And Iran having a nuclear weapon I've believed for a long time is a very, very bad outcome for the region and for the world."

State Department spokesman Robert A. Wood said Sunday that it was not possible say how much fissile material Iran has accumulated.

"There are differing view not only outside government but also inside the government" on how far Iran has gone, Wood said. He added that while he was not suggesting Mullen was incorrect, "We just don't know" exactly how much fissile material Iran now holds.

"We are concerned they are getting close" to having enough to build a nuclear weapon, he added. Wood spoke to reporters traveling with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton in Egypt.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said Iran has processed 2,222 pounds (1,010 kilograms) of low-enriched uranium. But the report left unclear whether Iran is now capable, even if it wanted, of further processing that material into a sufficient quantity of highly enriched uranium to arm one weapon.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who like Mullen appeared on the Sunday talk shows, did not go as far as Mullen. The Iranians, Gates said, are "not close to a weapon at this point and so there is some time" for continued diplomatic efforts.

And the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, recently told National Public Radio that the IAEA report "confirms what we all had feared and anticipated, which is that Iran remains in pursuit of its nuclear program."

Iran, now subjected to various penalties by the U.N., the U.S. and others over its nuclear program, denies it wants to build a bomb. It asserts its program is intended to provide the country with the homegrown ability to generate electricity from nuclear reactors.

Fewer kids have high lead levels than 20 years ago

CHICAGO (AP)—In a stunning improvement in children's health, far fewer kids have high lead levels than 20 years ago, new government research reports—a testament to aggressive efforts to get lead out of paint, water and soil.

Lead can interfere with the developing nervous system and cause permanent problems with learning, memory and behavior. Children in poor neighborhoods have generally been more at risk because they tend to live in older housing and in industrial areas.

Federal researchers found that just 1.4 percent of young children had elevated lead lev-

els in their blood in 2004, the latest data available. That compares with almost 9 percent in 1988.

"It has been a remarkable decline," said study co-author Mary Jean Brown of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "It's a public health success story."

The 84 percent drop extends a trend that began in the 1970s when efforts began to remove lead from gasoline. The researchers credited continuing steps to reduce children's exposure to lead in old house paint, soil, water and other sources.

The study was being released Monday in the March edition of

the journal Pediatrics. It is based on nearly 5,000 children, ages 1 to 5, who were part of a periodic government health survey.

The government considers levels of at least 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood to be elevated, although research has shown that levels less than that can still cause problems including attention and reading difficulties. There is no known "safe" level, the study authors noted.

Caroline Cox, research director of the Center for Environmental Health, a California-based advocacy group, noted that lead poisoning "is entirely preventable."

Washington state to allow 'dignity' deaths

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP)—Terminally ill patients with less than six months to live will soon be able to ask their doctors to prescribe them lethal medication in Washington state.

But even though the "Death with Dignity" law takes effect Thursday, people who might seek the life-ending prescriptions could find their doctors conflicted or not willing to write them.

Many doctors are hesitant to talk publicly about where they stand on the issue, said Dr. Tom Preston, a retired cardiologist and board member of Compassion & Choices, the group that campaigned for

and supports the law.

"There are a lot of doctors, who in principle, would approve or don't mind this, but for a lot of social or professional reasons, they don't want to be involved," he said.

But Preston said discussions about end-of-life issues between doctor and patient will increase because of the new law, and he thinks that as time goes on more and more doctors who don't have a religious or philosophical opposition will be open to participating.

"It will be a cultural shift," he said.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2006 that it was up to states

"I expect the Northeast will be hit pretty hard tonight so our expectations is that people flying into Washington, D.C., and Boston will need to call or check our Web site for possible cancellations," Hutcheson told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

Georgia transportation officials warned of potential icy buildup on roadways in middle and northern counties through Monday morning, especially as temperatures plummet overnight.

The late Southern snowfall revived memories of a large storm in 1993 that forecasters nicknamed the "Snowfall of the Century," affecting the region from Alabama to north of Washington, D.C., said Laura Griffith of the National Weather Service in Peachtree City, Ga. In that storm, Atlanta received 4.2 inches of snow and 13 inches fell on Birmingham.

Outside the CNN Center in downtown Atlanta, Flori Kwon of Claremont, Calif., took pictures of her son Jake, 5, cavorting in the snow.

"He wants to make a snowman but I don't think there's enough," Kwon said while large snowflakes landed in her hair. "We're kind of surprised it's snowing."

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ACROSS THE NATION

Burris says he's working hard to represent Ill.

CHICAGO (AP)—U.S. Sen. Roland Burris has told hundreds of supporters at a black church in Chicago that he's been working hard to represent them in Washington. Burris spoke at Sunday evening services at New Covenant Baptist Church on the city's South Side. He didn't mention the increasing calls for his resignation. Instead, he pointed to his accomplishments, including voting for President Barack Obama's economic stimulus bill. And he says he proposed legislation to recognize the slaves who built the Capitol. He says support and prayers from parishioners are keeping him going. On Sunday, Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn reiterated his call for Burris to resign so residents can vote in a special election to replace him.

23 homes destroyed in central Texas wildfire

BASTROP, Texas (AP)—A wildfire fueled by grass, brush and trees has destroyed at least 23 homes and three businesses in central Texas. Officials say two National Guard helicopters joined other aircraft Sunday in dropping water on the blaze near the towns of Bastrop and Smithville. Gov. Rick Perry has activated state resources, including four Blackhawk helicopters equipped to drop water and fire retardant, firefighters and equipment. The wildfire has charred just over a square mile since it was started Saturday by a fallen power line. Texas Forest Service spokesman Lewis Kearney says the fire is about 50 percent contained. He says some residents who were evacuated during the night were being escorted back into the area Sunday to identify their property.

2 girls killed when car flips into canal in Fla.

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Police in Florida say two young girls died when the car they were riding in flipped off the Florida Turnpike and into a canal. Good Samaritans helped police rescue 4-year-old Lexie Miller from the Chevy Malibu after its driver lost control near the Martin County-Palm Beach County line Sunday afternoon. She was taken to a nearby hospital, where she was pronounced dead. Divers later found 2-year-old Layla Ann Whitaker trapped in the car. Two adults rescued from the car, 28-year-old driver Richard Whitaker and 20-year-old passenger Sarah Tandy, were in critical condition. Sgt. Jorge Delahoz says the car hit a median and crashed through a tree line before landing in 15 to 20 feet of water. No charges have been filed and police haven't said what caused the crash.

Asia

Bangladesh charges 1,000 border guards in mutiny



Bangladeshi border guards sit at their headquarters in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Sunday, March 1, 2009. AP

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—More than 1,000 border guards were charged Sunday with murder and arson in a uprising that left at least 148 people dead or missing, most of them army officers whose bodies were hurriedly discarded by the mutineers.

The details of what the prime minister called “a planned massacre” emerged after the government withdrew its promise of amnesty and sought to repair its increasingly tense relations with the military.

One man, among just 33 officers known to have escaped from the two-day siege in the guards’ headquarters, described the scene

as “like doomsday for me.”

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina met with military officials furious that she offered amnesty to the mutinous border guards to persuade them to surrender. The officers argued that lives could have been saved if Hasina had ordered an army assault on the guards’ compound.

Hasina told Parliament she had asked for help from the FBI to investigate.

“We’ll definitely unearth everything,” she said.

The government announced that those directly responsible would not fall under the amnesty.

Firefighters have recovered

77 bodies, but at least 71 officers were still unaccounted for in the uprising at the Bangladesh Rifles border force headquarters in the capital, Dhaka. Teams searched for bodies buried in the compound or dumped in nearby sewers. Most of the missing were presumed dead, said Sheikh Mohammad Shajalal, a firefighter overseeing the search.

The insurrection has raised questions about the stability of Hasina’s two-month-old government in the impoverished South Asian country, which has seen nearly two dozen successful and failed military coups in its 38-year history.

NKorea, UN command hold urgent talks at DMZ

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—High-level military officials from North Korea and the U.S.-led U.N. Command held urgent talks at the border Monday amid heightened tensions in the region and concerns that the North intends to test-fire a long-range missile.

The talks at the village of Panmunjom inside the Demilitarized Zone dividing North and South Korea—the first meetings between general-level military officials since 2002—were hastily arranged after the North proposed them last week, U.N. command spokesman Kim Yong-kyu said.

“These talks can be useful in

building trust and preventing misunderstanding as well as introducing transparency regarding the intentions of both sides,” the U.N. command said in a statement. Kim said his office would disclose details about the meeting after it was over.

Relations between the two Koreas are at their lowest point in a decade, with North Korea bristling over South Korean President Lee Myung-bak’s hard-line policy toward Pyongyang. The two Koreas technically remain at war because their three-year conflict in the 1950s ended in a truce, not a peace treaty.

The tensions have intensified

in recent weeks amid reports that North Korea is preparing to test a long-range missile believed capable of reaching U.S. territory.

Analysts say communist North Korea also wants to capture President Barack Obama’s attention at a time when international disarmament talks with the regime remain stalled.

Obama is dispatching his envoy for North Korea, Stephen W. Bosworth, to Asia this week to discuss the nuclear dispute. Bosworth plans to meet with officials in China, Japan and South Korea, and will consult separately with Russian officials, the State Department said.

Indonesian tiger catchers race against time

SUNGAI GELAM, Indonesia (AP)—Indonesia’s tiger catchers have a double job—protecting humans from tigers, and tigers from humans.

The elite teams of rangers and conservationists rush to the scene every time villagers report attacks or sightings of critically endangered Sumatran tigers. First, they calm the people. And then, if there are signs the animal is nearby, they return with steel cage traps, live bait, heat-sensitive cameras and other equipment to capture the magnificent beasts.

This time Sartono, who at

40 has spent nearly half his life in the job, arrives with his six-member squad at a remote oil palm plantation in Sungai Gelam district, 375 miles west of the capital, Jakarta, knowing they’ll have to act fast. Three people have been killed in less than a week—Rabai Abdul Muthalib, 45, a rubber tapper ambushed near a river, and days later, Suyud, 50, and his son, Imam Mujianto, 21, who were sleeping in their hut when the yellow-eyed tiger pounced through the thin roof. The beast devoured the brain, heart and liver of the young-

est victim, spreading terror through surrounding villages.

Sartono knows if he and his team cannot put a quick end to the killing spree, residents will shoot or poison the Sumatran tiger, which is already on the brink of extinction because of rapid deforestation, poaching and clashes with humans.

There are only around 250 of the cats left in the wild, compared to about 1,000 in the 1970s, according to the World Wildlife Fund, meaning the *Panthera tigris sumatrae* could become the first large predator to go extinct in the 21st century.

World

Merkel, EU reject bailout for eastern Europe

BRUSSELS (AP)—German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other EU leaders flatly rejected a new multibillion euro (dollar) bailout for eastern Europe on Sunday, suggesting that additional aid be given to struggling nations only on a case-by-case basis.

Germany and the Netherlands also shot down suggestions that eastern European countries that have seen their currencies plummet be given a quick entry to the euro, which has remained strong against the U.S. dollar and Japanese yen. But French President Nicolas Sarkozy said the EU could look at reviewing the stringent euro currency membership criteria and two-year waiting period once the global economic crisis ends.

Germany, the region’s largest economy, has been under rising pressure to take the lead in rescuing eastern EU members staggering from sinking currencies, shrinking demand for exports and rising debt, but Chancellor Angela Merkel insisted a one-size-fits-all bailout was unwise.

“Saying that the situation is the same for all central and eastern European states, I don’t see that,” said Merkel, adding “you cannot compare” the dire situation in Hungary with that of other countries.

That tough stance came even as Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany warned that the global credit crunch was creating a widening economic chasm in the

27-nation bloc which threatened to rend Europe.

Noting that eastern members were being hit the hardest, he suggested setting up an EU fund of up to euro190 billion (\$241 billion) to help restore trust and solvency in eastern members.

“We should not allow that a new Iron Curtain should be set up and divide Europe,” Gyurcsany told reporters.

Eight other EU nations had joined Hungary in vowing to pressure richer members to back up vague pledges of support with action—Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania and the three Baltic states. But Hungary’s plan was quickly shot down by Germany and others, who balked at the costs.

Israel threatens painful response to Gaza rockets

JERUSALEM (AP)—Prime Minister Ehud Olmert threatened a painful response to Palestinian rocket fire menacing southern Israel, suggesting Sunday that the blistering offensive against Gaza Strip militants fell short of its goals.

The prospect of heightened hostilities in Hamas-ruled Gaza cast a pall over a week of crucial diplomatic activity, including an international conference designed to drum up billions of dollars to rebuild the heavily damaged territory. With a new Israeli government to take of-

fice within weeks, however, it wasn’t clear how sweeping the country’s response to the rockets would be.

More than 110 rockets and mortar shells have exploded in Israel in the six weeks since it ended its air and ground onslaught against Gaza, which was meant to end the rocket threat and stanch the flow of arms into Gaza. So far, Israel has responded to the rocket fire mainly with airstrikes targeting underground tunnels used to smuggle weapons and other goods into Gaza from Egypt.

On Sunday, Olmert told Gaza’s Islamic militant rulers to expect a severe response if the attacks don’t stop.

The rockets “will be answered with a painful, harsh, strong and uncompromising response from the security forces,” Olmert said at the start of the weekly Cabinet meeting.

There was no comment from Hamas or other Gaza militant groups. Several hours after Olmert spoke, a rocket exploded in southern Israel, causing no injuries.

Spain’s Basques pick regional government

BILBAO, Spain (AP)—Non-nationalists won more parliamentary seats than Basque nationalists in elections in Spain’s most turbulent region Sunday, in a result that could usher in the region’s first non-nationalist government in 30 years.

The ruling Basque Nationalist Party actually gained a seat to win 30 in the 75-seat parliament. But three smaller nationalist allies lost seats, leaving the coalition with a total of 37 seats—one short of the needed majority, electoral officials said on television and radio

with close to 100 percent of the votes counted.

In contrast, Spain’s Socialist party gained six seats to end with 24, and its allies the conservative Popular Party and the Democracy Union Party won 13 seats and one respectively, electoral officials said on state and regional television and radio. If the three parties agree to link up they will control 38 seats, enough for a parliamentary majority.

The results could mean a major reversal for the Basque Nationalist Party, which has ruled

this semiautonomous northern region of Spain since 1979 on a platform that courts separatist sentiments. The Socialists ran a campaign to retain strong links with central government.

The new Basque parliament will be the first to exclude radical nationalist parties supporting the armed separatist group ETA, which has killed more than 825 people during a violent separatist campaign since the late 1960s to try to establish an independent Basque country straddling northern Spain and southwestern France.

WORLD BRIEFS

Iraqi Shiites protest local vote in tense province

BAGHDAD (AP)—About 2,000 Shiites staged their first significant street protests against provincial election results Sunday, marching in tense Diyala province. The demonstrators in the Shiite enclaves of Muqadiyah and Khalis claimed Shiites were the victims of fraud and were denied seats on the influential provincial council. Under heavy guard, the protesters—waving Iraqi flags and chanting “No to sectarianism”—also demanded the election commission be replaced, alleging a Sunni bias. The rural province holds a mix of Iraq’s main sectarian and ethnic groups—Sunni Arabs, Shiites and Kurds—and has been a flashpoint for bloodshed among them and attacks on U.S. forces and Iraqi police. Sunnis won 15 seats on the incoming council in the Jan. 31 elections. Kurds took six and Shiites five. A secular party won three. The current council has 20 Shiites.

Israel’s attorney general says he’ll indict Olmert

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel’s attorney general notified Prime Minister Ehud Olmert on Sunday that he plans to indict him on suspicion of illicitly taking cash-stuffed envelopes from a Jewish-American businessman—a sensational case that turned public opinion so sharply against the Israeli leader that he was forced to resign. Olmert would become the first Israeli prime minister ever indicted. Before a decision on an indictment is made, Olmert will have one last chance to try to persuade Attorney General Meni Mazuz not to charge him, Mazuz said in a news release. The attorney general is already considering bringing Olmert to trial in a second corruption investigation. Five corruption investigations are pending against Olmert in all, and he has denied wrongdoing in each one. His spokesman Amir Dan predicted Sunday that the charges would “disappear in the end.”

Overdrive

2009 MERCEDES-BENZ S550 4MATIC

Luxurious, but not unreasonably so

By WARREN BROWN
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I've driven poor. I've driven rich. It doesn't matter the season, bad times or good, I much prefer rich. That might seem a feckless assessment in this winter of fiscal discontent. Joblessness, homelessness, swindles and bankruptcies frame the times. It is a season so dour, it seems impolitic to smile in public, let alone to motor about in an iconically luxurious car, the 2009 Mercedes-Benz S550 4Matic sedan.

But the simple truth is that many rich people remain rich, the shenanigans of Ponzi maven Bernard Madoff notwithstanding. And they can choose to be taken for a ride in a much more reliable, enjoyable carriage, such as the S550 4Matic.

It is a big sedan, "full-size" in the truest meaning of the word. It stretches a tad longer than 17 feet, end to end. It has a vault-like presence and weight—a curb weight, or factory weight minus passengers and cargo, of 4,630 pounds. You can load it with five huge adults and still have enough room for all passengers to feel like royalty in their own castle.

Extravagance is the nature of luxury; and the makers of the Mercedes-Benz S-Class cars have always taken great pride in expressions of luxury's essence. Why else would they have included a six-liter, 604-horsepower, V-12 engine in the S-Class line?

But I am a driver of gentler sensibilities. I like rich. But some things border on sacrilege. I chose, instead one of the more reasonable offerings of the S-Class—the all-wheel-drive S550 4Matic, equipped with a 5.5-liter, 382-horsepower V-8 linked to a seven-speed transmission that can be shifted automatically or manually.

"Reasonable" should always be this good—a big, heavy car, an automobile



Rich, in the guise of the Mercedes S550 4Matic, feels good.

THE WASHINGTON POST

that gives you the feeling of being inside a motorized fortress, yet one that moves with the alacrity and nimbleness of something smaller, sportier.

The nearly 325-mile drive here from our home in Virginia was no work at all. My passengers—my wife, Mary Anne and youngest daughter, Kafi—equated it to a ride aboard a luxury yacht or train.

"This is the meaning of luxury," said Kafi, settling back into one of the S550 4Matic's soft leather seats.

"You should have seen what he was driving last week," said Mary Anne, referring to a base Nissan Versa sub-

compact. It was an economy car absent the most rudimentary niceties, including a radio.

There ensued a conversation about values, too lengthy to recount here. But its substance was that no one, at least no one we know of among our well-educated friends in the United States, dreams of owning a base Nissan Versa.

The S550 4Matic, by comparison, is a bona fide dream car.

There is a pecking order to aspirations, Kafi said. "It's why so many young people fight so hard to get into Ivy League schools," she said.

I suppose.

But I know this: Rich, in the guise of the S550 4Matic, feels good. Smooth, expertly delivered power feels good, even with the consumption of premium unleaded gasoline at the rate of 21 miles per gallon in highway driving. Being in a car that cradles you, protects you with an array of active crash avoidance and passive crash mitigation devices, feels really good.

If you spend enough time in cars such as the S550 4Matic, you begin to understand something about how rich people think. It feels good to feel that good, so much so, you want to feel that good all the time. Wealth is addictive.

It has an intelligent four-wheel suspension, a computer-sensor enhanced affair that automatically adjusts vehicle ride and feel to rapidly changing road conditions. The result is a feel in which the road, regardless of the condition of its point of contact with the GLK 350 4Matic, is rendered unobtrusive.

"Unobtrusive" here does not mean soft, wimpy or dull. The ride is more firm than most sedan lovers would like. But it will please anyone who prefers having some sense of contact with the road, as opposed to floating upon it in the manner of piloting a boat upon the sea.

The overall feel is tight, right. The GLK 350 4Matic feels much lighter, much less bulky than its 4,036 pounds.

The interior is simple, functional, appealing and designed to serve drivers with passengers who spill things. The leatherette seat coverings are durable, wipe-capable.

The engine—a 3.5-liter V-6 with 268-horsepower and 258-foot-pounds of torque—is no slouch. It moves the GLK 350 4Matic with authority and can tow up to 3,500 pounds. It gets up to 21 miles per gallon on the highway. But we do wish it would drink something other than premium gasoline.

How about a diesel in this one, Mercedes-Benz? Please?

MERCEDES-BENZ GLK 350 4MATIC

Brilliance within reach

BY WARREN BROWN
THE WASHINGTON POST

result of an erroneous judgment developed two years ago during a corporate "product reveal" in which I was shown a prototype of this week's subject vehicle.

Back then, I was decidedly unwooed. The prototype GLK 350, built on Mercedes-Benz's compact C-Class car platform, looked smaller than any SUV ought to look. It seemed a delicate, nanny-boo-boo mobile—an overpriced conveyance of ill-defined nature wearing a luxury badge.

I erred.

The all-wheel-drive GLK 350 4Matic and its rear-wheel-drive GLK 350 sibling are brilliant—perfectly sized and mannered for routine urban use, yet built and tempered to run over the most challenging roads.

My wife, Mary Anne, and I drove the test model all over northern and central Virginia, over roads smooth and rough, through weather fair, but mostly foul, often compromised by sleet and snow.

Our verdict was that we liked it so much, we would like to own one—an aspiration not completely beyond possibility, as it might have been in the case of other vehicles wearing the Mercedes-Benz badge in the United States. The rear-wheel-drive GLK 350 starts at \$33,900. The tested all-wheel-drive GLK 350 4Matic starts at a price \$2,000 north of that. For employed members of the upper-middle class, ownership in that price range is at least dream-range.

That is what Mercedes-Benz's executives were thinking when they dreamed up the GLK 350. Their target was a Subaru Forester-Subaru Outback customer who someday dreamed of owning and driving something with a Mercedes-Benz badge—a psychographic recipe for a neither-nor mobile that, in execution and road performance, risked being little more than cheap.

But the GLK 350 4Matic is a world-class Mercedes-Benz, minus the froth.

NUTS & BOLTS

By WARREN BROWN
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

COMPLAINTS

There was some grumbling about the absence of seat heat in the rear seats of the test car. Rear seat heat, however, is available as an option.

RIDE, ACCELERATION AND HANDLING

Ride and handling are firm, but comfortable, pleasing to anyone seeking superior sedan performance. Considering its weight, the car is remarkably fast. But it falls short of the rip-roaring performance of a muscle car, or a track-ready machine.

HEAD-TURNING QUOTIENT

Rich and built to look that way. It's best to drive this one humbly and politely in these trying times.

BODY STYLE/LAYOUT

The S-Class is a line of full-size, premium luxury, front-engine sedans available with rear-wheel-drive or all-wheel-drive and with a long list of options, including an available 604-horsepower V-12 engine.

ENGINE/TRANSMISSION

The S550 4Matic comes with a 5.5-liter, 32-valve V-8 engine that develops 382 horsepower at 6,000 revolutions per minute and 391 foot-pounds of torque at 2,800 revolutions per minute. The engine is mated to a seven-speed transmission that can be shifted automatically or manually.

CAPACITIES

There are seats for five people. Luggage capacity is 16.3 cubic feet. The fuel tank holds 23.8 gallons of required premium unleaded gasoline.

MILEAGE

That big fuel tank masks the reality that the S550 4Matic swallows premium fuel at the egregious rate of 21 miles per gallon on the highway.

SAFETY

S-Class Mercedes-Benz cars historically have been among the safest on the world's highways. The 2009 model comes with an array of active and passive safety devices, including electronic collision avoidance systems, four-wheel disc brakes with antilock control, electronic brake assistance, side and head air bags, electronic stability and traction control.

PRICE

The base price on the 2009 Mercedes-Benz S550 4Matic is \$92,350. Dealer's invoice price on that model is \$85,886. Price as tested is \$114,410, including \$19,885 in options (AMG sport package including sport wheels and lower body trim, radar-supported collision avoidance system, premium leather seats, power glass roof, onboard navigation, premium sound system with iPod/MP3 player compatibility), a \$875 destination charge and \$1,300 federal gas-guzzler tax. Prices sourced from Mercedes-Benz, Edmunds.com, and Cars.com, an affiliate of The Washington Post.

PURSE-STRINGS NOTE

Compare with Audi A8, BMW 7-Series and Lexus LS 460.

In many parts of the world, Mercedes-Benz cars and trucks are sought for their utilitarian value. A cab driver in South Africa or a delivery truck driver in Kazakhstan is less impressed with the Mercedes-Benz tri-star as a symbol of luxury than he is dependent upon it as a promise of reliability.

That is true of a variety of vehicle brands in countries where automotive repair shops are few and often are less-than-quality enterprises when found.

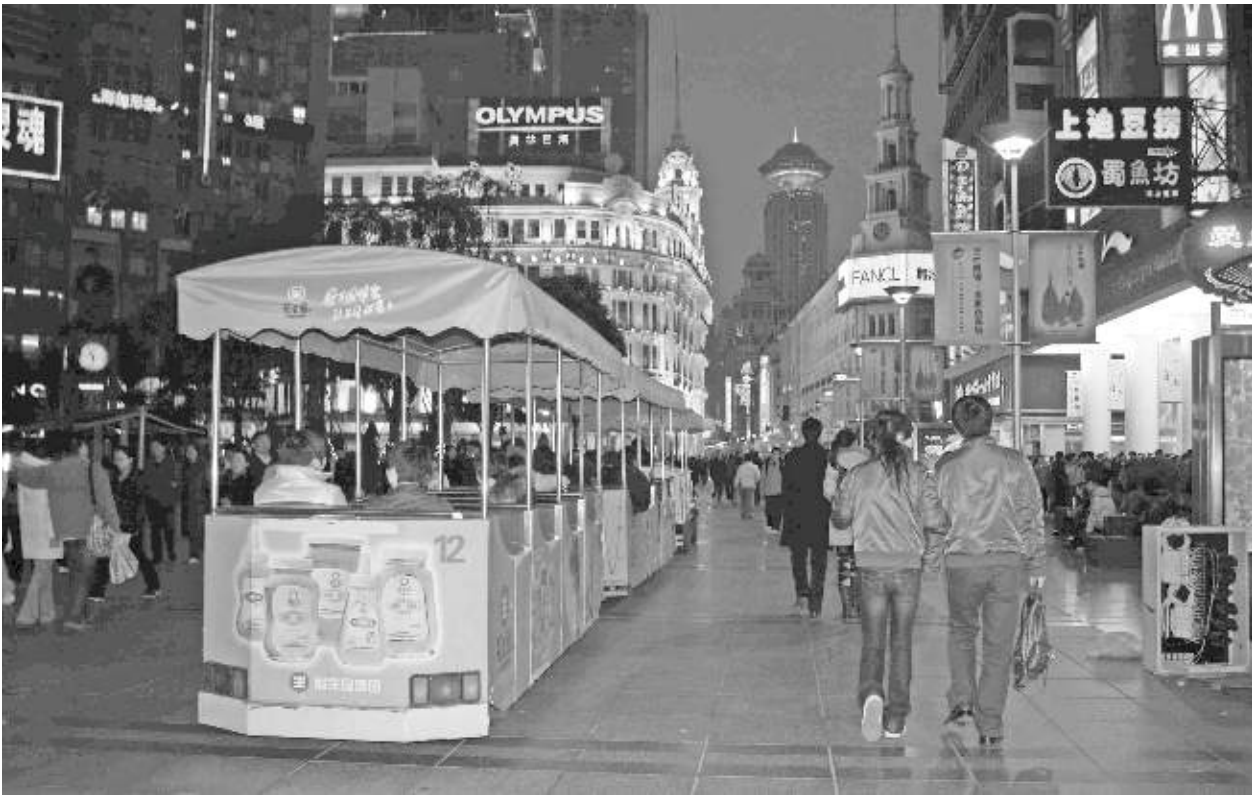
Locals in those places look for names they think will stay on the road—names that include Isuzu, Land Rover, Nissan, Toyota and Mercedes-Benz.

But in the United States, Mercedes-Benz has been more interested in burnishing its image as a manufacturer of luxury automobiles, a maker more of optional than necessary transport—until now.

Welcome the 2010 Mercedes-Benz GLK 350 4Matic. In this country, we'll call it a "premium compact sport-utility vehicle." But here's betting that in less-developed, or perhaps less-pretentious parts of the world, it will be called what it is—a little lorry, a "carryall" of particular prowess, designed to go anywhere most SUVs can and do what most of them can do without their egregious thirst for fuel or appetite for space.

I was prepared to trash the thing—the

Life & Style



Nanjing Road at night.

First time in first class

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

First class has always seemed like some mythical place to me. I never knew what went on behind that curtain. Yes, I walk past the few rows every time I enter the plane to walk back to my seat, in what is inevitably the last row of the plane, forcing me to sleep upright the entire flight. But walking past the seats with the extra two inches of width space, the extra foot of leg room, and the fully adjustable seats leaves more questions than answers.

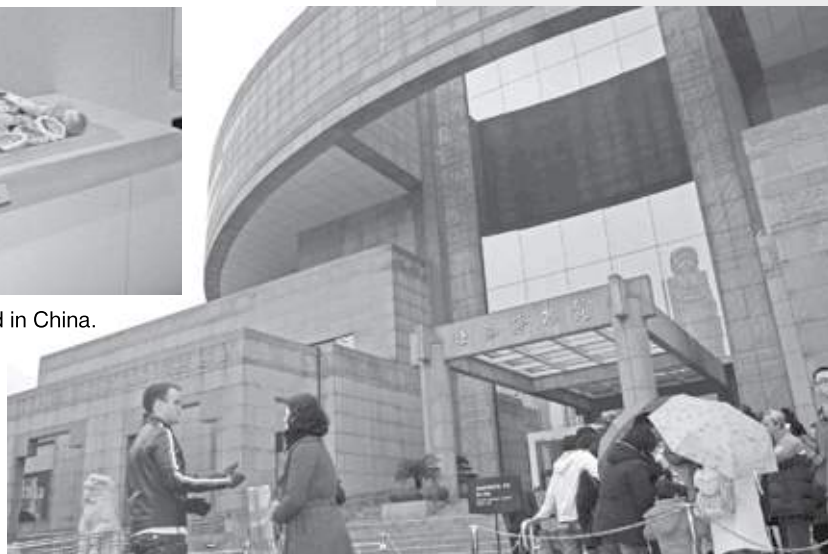
Once the flight attendance pulls that curtain, what goes on? For all I know the passengers could have an all-out rave, be eating fillet mignon, or more than likely, getting more drink refills.



Shells were some of the first currency used in China.

are these people in first class?

Not to mention the fact that Southwest Airlines—the budget airline that was the go-to carrier for the majority of the first 22 years of my life—doesn't even have first class. If an entire airline can't handle it, who are these people and what are they re-



People wait outside in the rain to enter the Shanghai Museum

Unfortunately, to my disappointment, there was no 4am wild and crazy party, no mini-movie screen dropping from the ceiling, and no big-name celebrity. (I'm not counting my traveling companion, KSPN2 TV reporter Lannie Walker. To me she's always just going to be Lannie, no matter how many times people stop and ask to take her picture).

What and who did I see?

About 5am I looked around and noticed that I was the only one with a fully upright seat. Everyone else had long before reclined their seat and fallen asleep. Mothers placed their hand gently on their kids as the two fell asleep next to each other, men curled up in balls trying to stay warm under the blanket, and everyone tossed and turned at some point. The vision was really no different than what I see during every night flight back in that drab place called coach.

First class, or business class, as it is now known (how politically correct), really is just coach to a higher degree. But that higher degree is something I believe everyone should experience once in life.

SHANGHAI DAY 1 'Different but intriguing'

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

I've struggled with my diet pop addiction for more than 10 years and across three continents, so I can tell a lot about a country simply by its soda products.

Within an hour of landing in Shanghai, I knew China was going to be an interesting place.

It's not possible to find "diet" soda outside of U.S. soil. It's "light" every place else. Every place I've been to, at least. But some countries are less apt to help Coke and Pepsi Light addicts feed their addiction, and China seems to be one such country. I was finally able to find a Pepsi Light that I refuse to share how much I paid for, but once in hand I had trouble opening the can. I pulled the tab and it didn't budge. I looked sheepishly at my tour guide and asked for her help. She took the can from my hands and instead of pushing the tab down, the only way I know how to open pop cans, she simply pulled it off, similar to a can of V-8.

As crazy as it sounds, my experience with this simple can of Pepsi Light represents the Shanghai I saw Saturday—a little off, a little different, but very intriguing nonetheless.

The day started with a trip to the Shanghai Museum, which, thanks to a



A woman makes edible animals.

hesitant, but nonetheless obliged.

"I thought he just thought I was dehydrated or thirsty," she said afterward.

Once the liquid safety questions were out of the way, we walked through the many floors of the museum, viewing the ceramics, seals, paintings, calligraphy, currency and jades of China. Some of the jades are so expensive, I learn, that back when China was divided into several countries, a jade could cover the cost to buy one of those mini countries.

The four-story building is set in a square shape with a round ceiling, representing the Chinese belief that the earth is square and the sky is round.

Another intriguing moment came as we prepared to leave the building and Lannie was stopped. A woman asked if she could take her picture with Lannie. Maybe I was wrong before. I really did sit next to and am traveling with a celebrity!

Next up was the People's Square—one of the many places in the People's Republic of China that shows it belongs to the citizens. Underneath the square is an underground market with more shops than on all of Saipan, selling fairly reasonably-priced clothes.

The Path to World Expo is nearby in the Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center. Visitors can learn all about the Expo's history and learn about Shanghai's plans for next year, as the city prepares for the May 1 to Oct. 31, 2010, event.

As our tour guide said, you can't say you've seen Shanghai without seeing Nanjing Road. No, the store-lined street wasn't much different than other streets in big cities, but there was a certain level of relaxation in the air that is often missing on similar metropolitan streets.

Although in China, it doesn't mean we don't love our Western ways, so we decided on Western food for the night and headed to a jazz bar for some familiar food and familiar music.

The day ends like it begins, with a calorie-free beverage. Only this time it's a Coke Light in a bottle. As I unscrew the familiar cap, I realize I could get used to this place.



A woman asks KSPN2 TV reporter Lannie Walker to take a picture with her.

Another mystery is the lucky passengers of first class. Who are they?

On one of the many legs of my flight when I moved to Saipan I sat next to a ranking military official in coach. I won't say his name, but he's regularly in the news nowadays. If he's sitting in coach (coach!), who

ceiving in this magical realm?

Well, I finally got my answers early Saturday morning as I sat in seat 2G on a flight from Saipan to Shanghai.

Everything was how I envisioned it. The seats were just a few inches wider, the leg room a little bigger, and the quantity of food a little greater.



The design for the 2010 World Expo that will be held in Shanghai.

Iran angered over films 'The Wrestler' and '300'



US actress Annette Bening, right, listens to fellow US actress Alfre Woodard, left, as Iranian actress Fatemeh Motamed Arya, looks on at center, during a seminar "Acting for Film" given by Bening and Woodard, in Tehran, Iran, Sunday, March 1, 2009.

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—An adviser to Iran's president on Sunday demanded an apology from a team of visiting Hollywood actors and movie industry officials, including Annette Bening, saying films such as "300" and "The Wrestler" were "insulting" to Iranians.

Without an apology, members of Iran's film industry should refuse to meet with representatives from the nine-member team, said Javad Shamaqdari, the art and cinema adviser to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"In my viewpoint, it is a failure to

have an official meeting with one who is insulting," Shamaqdari told The Associated Press.

The film "300," portrays the battle of Thermopylae in 480 B.C., in which a force of 300 Spartans held off a massive Persian army at a mountain pass

in Greece for three days. It angered many Iranians for the way Persians are depicted as decadent, sexually flamboyant and evil in contrast to the noble Greeks.

Iranians also criticized "The Wrestler" starring Mickey Rourke as a rundown professional wrestler who is preparing for a rematch with his old nemesis, "The Ayatollah." During a fight scene, "The Ayatollah" tries to choke Rourke with an Iranian flag before Rourke pulls the flagpole away, breaks it and throws it into the cheering crowd.

Neither movie was shown in Iran.

While American actors such as Sean Penn have traveled to Iran, it is rare for such a large group to visit. In February, Iran denied visas to a U.S. women's badminton team that had been invited to compete in a tournament in Iran.

The group includes the President of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Sid Ganis; actors Bening, and Alfre Woodard; producer William Horberg; AMPAS Special Events Programmer and Exhibitions Curator Ellen Harrington; and Tom Pollock, the former Universal Pictures chairman.

According to the Web site of Iran's Cinema Association, the group arrived Friday in Iran. They met a group of Iranian artists on Saturday, and will be holding educational seminars in directing, screenwriting, acting, producing, marketing and film distribution.

Shamaqdari says Iranians will warmly host the visiting Americans "but it will not stop Iranians from demanding an apology."

Iranian political analyst Saeed Laylaz downplayed Shamaqdari's comments, saying they were meant for domestic consumption. He pointed out that the visit must have been approved by the government.

"It is not likely any American, especially Hollywood people, could visit Iran without Iranian government approval," said Laylaz.

Meanwhile, the visiting Hollywood actors and industry officials held their seminars Sunday as scheduled. During one session, Ali Reza Raisian, the head of the Association of Iranian Directors, said the visit would improve Iran's movie industry.

Most ordinary Iranians were not aware of the visit since state radio and television did not widely report it. But those who had heard said they hoped it would improve relations between the two countries.

"The two countries have tried to wrestle in many ways," said Mahrokh Razani, a self-described movie fan who said he found out about the trip on the Internet. "I hope they can have better ties through movies."

Hossein Taghi, an Iranian businessman who often travels to the U.S., said he was surprised and elated that well-known Hollywood figures would visit Iran.

"This made my family and me very happy," said Taghi. "It is a sign of goodwill by both countries."

The visits come as President Barack Obama has indicated a new willingness to open up relations with Iran.

Relations between the two countries have been strained over concerns in the West that Iran is trying to develop a nuclear weapons program, something Tehran denies. The U.S. has also alleged that overwhelmingly Shiite Iran supports Shiite militias in Iraq, which Iran says is not true.

The two countries have not had diplomatic relations since the 1979 Islamic Revolution and the hostage-taking at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

Siegfried and Roy perform with tiger in final show

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Illusionists Siegfried and Roy—and the Bengal tiger that ended their careers—shared the stage again Saturday night for a haunting final performance.

The brief charity show saw Roy Horn and Siegfried Fischbacher side by side with Montecore, the massive white tiger that brutally mauled Horn during a 2003 performance.

Horn re-emerged Saturday dressed in black robes, his face covered with a skeletal mask. The dark stage was covered in smoke. Horn limped slowly onstage, often steadying himself on Fischbacher's shoulder.

The two slowly performed a signature illusion as Fischbacher, dressed in white robes and a mask, stood inside a cage, which was then cloaked in drapes. As Horn removed the curtain seconds later, Fischbacher appeared across stage, a hulking tiger in his place.

As the crowd took to its feet, the men removed their masks. Fischbacher standing between the tiger and Horn. They waved and blew kisses at the audience, but said nothing.

An announcer left the crowd with this final thought: "Within all of us there is an illusive melody, which when heard and followed will lead you to the fulfillment of your fondest dreams."

The performers' manager, Bernie Yuman, later confirmed the tiger was Montecore.

In October 2003, the tiger sank its teeth into Horn's neck, dragging him offstage in front of a horrified audience. The illusionist, now 64, was partially paralyzed, suffering a damaged

neck artery and crushed windpipe.

After 13 years and more than 5,000 performance, "Siegfried & Roy" show at The Mirage immediately went dark, ending one of the most successful shows in Las Vegas history.

The Saturday performance at the Bellagio hotel-casino was the highlight of a lavish benefit for the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health. The center, which will treat brain disorders like those Horn now suffers, is set to open later this year in a building designed by architect Frank Gehry.

Siegfried and Roy's performance will air Friday in a one-hour special on ABC's "20/20."

During Horn's long rehabilitation, both men remained devoted to their exotic habitat on the Las Vegas Strip. The Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat at The Mirage hotel-casino houses lions, tigers and leopards. Fischbacher, 69, has called it Horn's "reason to get up in the morning."

The pair have said they believe Montecore sensed Horn was having a mini-stroke and was dragging him to safety, rather than attacking him. Animal experts have disputed that theory. After a two-year review, federal investigators never determined what set off the tiger.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture did find that the "Siegfried & Roy" show failed to protect the audience because it had no barrier separating the exotic animals from the crowd.

The illusionists' production company, S&R Productions, received a letter of noncompliance but was not fined.

Haring or not, huge painting on sale for 99 cents

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (AP)—A 7-foot painting that may or may not be the work of famed pop artist Keith Haring went on sale on eBay Friday night. Opening bid: 99 cents.

The seller is a Pennsylvania man, Ed Oswald, who believes the "Hope" painting to be an original Haring.

But his cousin Kermit Oswald, a childhood friend of Haring and one of the world's leading authorities on his work, has long said it's a knockoff.

As a result, the eBay listing does not claim the painting is an authentic Haring. Instead, buyers will bid on "an original painting on board from the 1980's in a remarkable likeness and style of a Keith Haring, with a very interesting story & provenance."

The unsigned painting is on the back of a piece of wood paneling and shows a yellow stick figure holding aloft a red heart. The word "hope" is printed within the heart's outlines. Thick squiggles radiate outward, a Haring trademark.

Ed Oswald said he discovered the painting four years ago in the attic of relatives who knew Haring from childhood and bought the piece at auction in the 1980s. He said he immediately thought it to be Haring's work.

But when he tried selling it as such in April 2005, his cousin told The Associated Press the painting was a fake.

"I don't know the origins of the thing. I just know what it's not," Kermit Oswald said Friday.

Told the starting bid was 99 cents, he gave a hearty laugh and quipped: "I hope it closes at that. That would be fair."

If deemed authentic, the painting could be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, said Norb Novocin, whose Delaware-based company, Estate Auctions Inc., is handling the 10-day auction.



In this April 20, 2005 file photo, a painting titled "Hope" reputed to be by Keith Haring, the famed pop artist is shown in an auction house in Douglasville, Pa.

Haring, who grew up in Pennsylvania Dutch country, died in 1990 of AIDS at age 31. His work is marked by colorful geometric shapes, bold lines and recurring motifs such as radiating babies, animals and flying saucers.

Ed Oswald said he was thrilled when he found the painting but now just wants to be rid of it.

"As far as my wife and I are concerned, it's just a piece of art that looks like something he could have done and that's it," he said. "It's just time to let it go."

He said he's had the piece hanging in a friend's stall at an antiques market hoping someone who knew something about it—perhaps even the artist who painted it, if not Haring—would see it.

A few people wanted to buy it, including one who offered several thousand dollars, but nobody came forward to claim it as their own or give any clues about its origin, said Oswald, who thinks Haring outlined the piece and had someone else fill it in with color.

Novocin said he doesn't know how much the piece might fetch but it could draw a high bid from someone who hopes to get it authenticated.

That would be a gamble, however. Kermit Oswald is the president of the Haring Foundation, which is the definitive authority on whether works are authentic.

'Madea' locks up top spot at weekend box office

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Tyler Perry's Madea Goes to Jail" locked up \$16.5 million in ticket sales to claim the top spot at the box office for a second straight weekend, beating out "Jonas Brothers: The 3D Concert Experience."

The Jonas Brothers film, featuring the band on stage and off, took in \$12.7 million, the second-biggest opening for a concert film behind 2008's "Hannah Montana & Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert." That 3-D film, chronicling fellow Disney idol Miley Cyrus, premiered at the top of the charts after playing in just 683 theaters. "Jonas Brothers" opened in 1,271 theaters.

"'Hannah Montana' set a bar so high it's going to take forever to knock it off," said Chuck

Viane, president of distribution for Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures. "Everything about it worked. She was coming off a

great album and tour and three years on the Disney Channel. I don't think any set of circumstances will ever be quite what



In this Feb. 18, 2009 file photo, actor Tyler Perry attends the premiere of "Tyler Perry's: Madea Goes to Jail" in New York.

'Hannah' had."

Feisty, pistol-packing granny Madea remained unstoppable at the box office. The two previous films centering on Perry's foul-mouthed character—2005's "Diary of Mad Black Woman" and 2006's "Madea's Family Reunion"—also debuted at No. 1, and they grossed more than \$150 million total.

"We've been talking a lot lately about people going to the movies to escape," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box office tracker Media By Numbers. "Usually, people want to escape from jail, but people keep wanting to escape to jail with Madea. That character has made a huge mark. If you've got 'Tyler Perry' or 'Madea' in the title, you've got a hit."

"Slumdog Millionaire," riding high after collecting eight

1. "Tyler Perry's Madea Goes to Jail," \$16.5 million.
2. "Jonas Brothers: The 3D Concert Experience," \$12.7 million.
3. "Slumdog Millionaire," \$12.1 million.
4. "Taken," \$9.9 million.
5. "He's Just Not That Into You," \$5.8 million.
6. "Paul Blart: Mall Cop," \$5.6 million.
7. "Coraline," \$5.2 million.
8. "Street Fighter: The Legend of Chun-Li," \$4.6 million.
9. "Confessions of a Shopaholic," \$4.4 million.
10. "Fired Up," 3.8 million.

Oscars last week, finished third with \$12.1 million, bringing its total to \$115 million and giving it the biggest post-Academy Awards weekend for a best picture Oscar winner in 10 years.

"I still run into people who haven't seen it," said Sheila DeLoach, senior vice president of distribution at Fox Searchlight. "I'm like 'Hello? Do you live on the planet?' But obviously, there were a lot of people who hadn't seen it yet or we wouldn't have

gone up 45 percent this weekend, so it's really terrific."

The week's other new wide release, the video game adaptation "Street Fighter: The Legend of Chun-Li" distributed by 20th Century Fox, opened at No. 8 with \$4.6 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Media By Numbers LLC. Final figures will be released Monday.

French film honors Hoffman, Penn

PARIS (AP)—The French film industry honored Dustin Hoffman and saluted Sean Penn Friday during a ceremony that saw its coveted Cesar for best film going to Martin Provost's "Seraphine."

In all, "Seraphine" took seven Cesars, the French equivalent of the Oscars. The film is based on the magical true-life story of a painter known as Seraphine of Senlis. Paris' Musee Mayol recently exhibited her works.

Yolande Moreau, who plays Seraphine, won in the 34th annual Cesar awards best actress category for her portrayal of the dimwitted maid whose talents as a painter were discovered by a German art collector on the eve of World War I.

The Cesar for best actor went to Vincent Cassel in "Mesrine," another story based on real life, this time the tale

named an honorary commander in France's National Order of Arts and Letters.

He fought back tears Thursday. On Friday, he was vis-

leaving the stage, "I ain't finished yet."

This year's best-actor Oscar winner Sean Penn, a guest of honor, presented the best film award to Martin Provost for "Seraphine."

The "Milk" star's own movie, "Into the Wild," missed the best foreign film award which went to the Israeli animated documentary by Ari Folman "Valse avec Bachir" (Waltz With Bashir).

The French school drama "Entre les murs" (The Class)—which won the Cannes film festival last year—took home the Cesar for best adaptation. The Paris high school class that the film was based on presented the award for best set design—which went to Thierry Francois for "Seraphine."

On a disappointing note, the all-time box office hit for a French film, "Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis," being remade in the United States by Will Smith as "Welcome to the Sticks," failed to take an honor in the only category for which it was nominated, best original scenario. That Cesar went to "Seraphine."



U.S. actor Dustin Hoffman, left, holds his Cesar award given for his body of work, as U.S. actor Sean Penn, right, looks on after the 34th French Cesar Awards ceremony in Paris, Friday, Feb. 27, 2009.

ibly awkward—and admitted it when collecting the Cesar to a standing ovation.

"I never learned how to bow," Hoffman said, adding that only acting made him feel sure of himself and declaring before

Random House buys 'Moosewood Cookbook' publisher

NEW YORK (AP)—Random House Inc., which recently underwent a major consolidation, is expanding again.

The publisher announced Monday that it acquired Ten Speed Press, which specializes in cookbooks, business and spiritual works, including such favorites as "The Moosewood Cookbook" and "What Color is Your Parachute?" the million-selling job-hunting guide series.

"This is a real opportunity for

us to further grow our business ..." Random House CEO Markus Dohle said in a statement.

Random House spokesman Stuart Applebaum said that "under Mr. Dohle, Random House is very open to discussion about potential acquisitions which would be a good fit with our current portfolio of imprints worldwide."

Late last year, Random House announced it was reducing its major divisions from five

to three, with an undetermined number of employees laid off. The consolidation came about six months after Dohle replaced Peter Olson as CEO and began a companywide review.

Ten Speed Press, based in Berkeley, Calif., was founded in 1971 by Philip Wood, who will continue to serve as publisher emeritus.

Random House is owned by the German media conglomerate Bertelsmann AG.

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NOW SHOWING



Love Me Again

Friday 4:25 7:20 9:50
 Saturday 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:50
 Sunday 1:30 4:25 7:20
 Mon and Tues 4:25 7:20

Piolo Pascual, Angel Locsin

Love, Romance, Drama • Rated PG

Synopsis

Arah (Angel Locsin) dreams of a better life—different from the life she knows in Bukidnon. Ranches everywhere are closing one by one. The glory her hometown once knew was slowly disappearing in favour of life abroad, particularly in Australia. Arah believes this too. Australia will save them from poverty. But Migo (Piolo Pascual) does not share this belief. He believes that Bukidnon's glory will return if only people didn't leave. Migo is Arah's first love.



The Uninvited

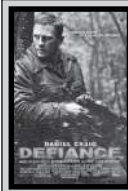
Friday 4:05 7:25 9:35
 Saturday 1:20 4:05 7:25 9:35
 Sunday 1:20 4:05 7:25
 Mon and Tues 4:05 7:25

Elizabeth Banks, David Strathairn

Horror, Remake • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

A deadly battle of wills begins when Anna returns from a psychiatric facility and investigates the circumstances surrounding her mother's suspicious and untimely death. While Anna recuperates from the tragedy, her father becomes engaged to Rachel, her mother's former nurse, and moves her into their home. Anna's dismay quickly turns to horror when she is visited by her mother's ghost—crying out for revenge and pointing an accusing finger at Rachel.



Defiance

Friday 4:00 7:00 9:45
 Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:45
 Sunday 1:00 4:10 7:10
 Mon and Tues 4:00 7:00

Daniel Craig, Liev Schreiber

Action, Drama, War • Rated R

Synopsis

The year is 1941 and the Jews of Eastern Europe are being massacred by the thousands. Managing to escape certain death, three brothers take refuge in the dense surrounding woods they have known since childhood. There they begin their desperate battle against the Nazis. At first it is all they can do to stay alive. But gradually, as whispers of their daring spread, they begin to attract others—men and women, young and old—willing to risk everything for the sake of even a moment's freedom.



Friday the 13th

Friday 4:20 7:05 10:00
 Saturday 1:05 4:20 7:05 10:00
 Sunday 1:15 4:10 7:10
 Mon and Tues 4:20 7:05

Jared Padalecki, Amanda Righetti

Horror, Remake • Rated R

Push

Friday 4:15 7:30 9:40
 Saturday 1:10 4:15 7:30 9:40
 Sunday 1:10 4:15 7:30
 Mon and Tues 4:15 7:30

Chris Evans, Dakota Fanning

Thriller Supernatural • Rated PG 13



Taken

Friday 4:30 7:15 9:55
 Saturday 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:55
 Sunday 1:25 4:30 7:15
 Mon and Tues 4:30 7:15

Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace

Action, Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13



Pink Panther 2

Friday 4:10 7:10 9:30
 Saturday 1:15 4:10 7:10 9:30
 Sunday 1:15 4:10 7:10
 Mon and Tues 4:10 7:10

Steve Martin, Andy Garcia

Comedy, Mystery • Rated PG

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Chan returns with gang thriller

HONG KONG (AP)—Jackie Chan is known for playing the lovable, comical action hero, but the “Rush Hour” star takes on an unusually dark role as a desperate Chinese immigrant who becomes a hit man for a Japanese gangster in his return to Chinese-language film.

The 54-year-old Hong Kong native said Wednesday he’s trying to prove with “Shinjuku Incident” that he’s a genuine actor with a broad repertoire.

“I hope to play good guys, bad guys, minor roles, major roles, ghosts and gods—I want to play everything,” Chan told The Associated Press in an interview. “I hope to become Asia’s Al Pacino or Robert De Niro.”

In the movie, his first Chinese

film since the 2006 comedy “Rob-B-Hood,” Chan plays a Chinese tractor repairman who smuggles himself to Tokyo to look for his girlfriend and ends up working for the Japanese yakuza, or gangsters.

Chan said it was tough shedding his flashy kung fu moves and cheeky grins for his new movie.

“The director would tell me, ‘your laugh is too cute,’ or in a fight scene, ‘you can’t move too dramatically,’” Chan said.

The director asked him to move as if he didn’t know kung fu: “Wow, it was so difficult.”

“Shinjuku Incident” is also a risky choice for the veteran actor, who, according to director Derek Yee, paid for about half of the movie’s \$25 million budget.

Chan’s role as an illegal Chinese immigrant who works for Japanese mobsters could offend nationalistic Chinese still upset with Japan over atrocities committed by its soldiers during World War II.

Yee told the AP earlier he has decided not to release the film in China because he didn’t want to tone down its graphic violence. China doesn’t have a ratings system, so every movie has to be edited for audiences of all ages.

Violence aside, it is unclear if the movie could have passed Chinese censors given the sensitivity of the question of a Chinese man working for Japanese crime lords.

Chinese censors asked Oscar winner Ang Lee to edit his 2006

spy thriller “Lust, Caution,” so it was more ambiguous on the question of whether a student activist gave away the plot to assassinate a Chinese spy chief allied with the Japanese.

Nevertheless, the film is likely to be seen by many mainland Chinese through pirated DVD copies, as Chan himself predicted.

“I’m sure this movie will be widely available on the streets in China the day after it’s released elsewhere,” he said.

“Shinjuku Incident” will have its world premiere on March 22 as one of the two opening films of the Hong Kong International Film Festival and will be generally released in Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia on April 2 and in Japan on May 1.

Michel Gondry in talks to direct ‘Green Hornet’

HONG KONG (AP)—Columbia Pictures says it is in talks with “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind” director Michel Gondry to replace Hong Kong comedian Stephen Chow at the helm of its adaptation of “The Green Hornet.”

Producer Neal Moritz said in a statement issued by the Hollywood studio Tuesday that the French filmmaker’s works are “as daring as they are extraordinary.”

Chow was originally slated to direct and star as Kato in “The Green Hornet” alongside Seth Rogen, but said in December he backed out as director so he could work on a superhero comedy with Jack Black.

The original series, which debuted on the radio in 1936, is about a newspaper publisher who moonlights as a masked crime-fighter along with his martial arts-expert sidekick.

In 1966, it was turned into an ABC television series starring Van Williams as the title character and Bruce Lee as Kato. It ran for one season.

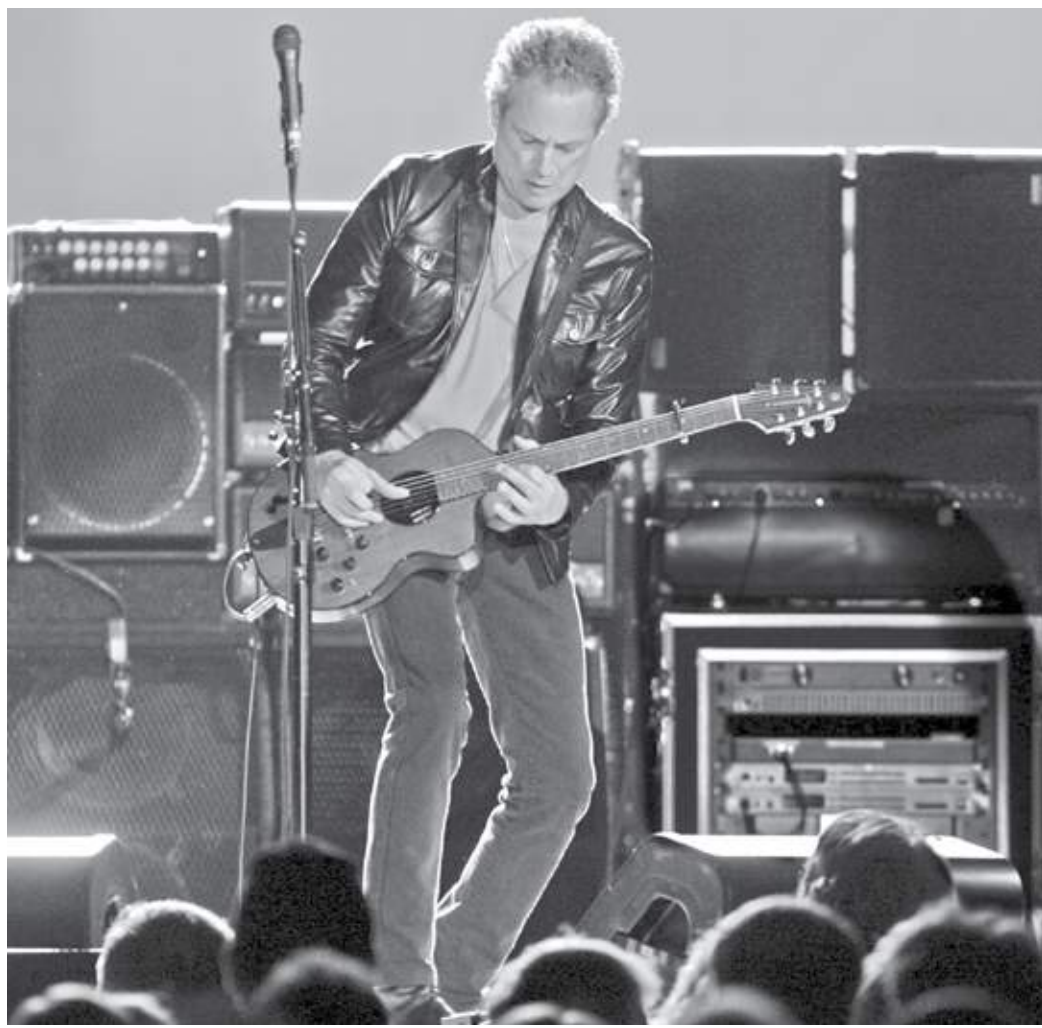
Unfinished novel by David Foster Wallace coming next year

NEW YORK (AP)—A long, unfinished novel by David Foster Wallace is scheduled for a posthumous release next year.

“The Pale King,” excerpted in The New Yorker magazine edition coming out Monday, is set in an Internal Revenue Service office in Illinois in the 1980s.

Wallace’s longtime publisher, Little, Brown and Company, will release the novel. Little, Brown said in a statement Sunday that the novel runs “several hundred thousand words and will include notes, outlines, and other material.”

Wallace, best known for the 1,000-page novel “Infinite Jest,” was a longtime sufferer from depression who committed suicide last fall. He was 46 and had been working on “The Pale King” for several years.



CONCERT TOUR

Fleetwood Mac guitarist Lindsey Buckingham performs in their first stop of the “Unleashed 2009” tour in Pittsburgh, Sunday, March 1, 2009.

Snoop Dogg appears at Nation of Islam convention

ROSEMONT, ILL. (AP)—Snoop Dogg is among several rappers attending the Nation of Islam’s annual convention in a Chicago suburb.

Wearing sunglasses, a dark suit and a tie, Snoop spoke briefly in front of thousands on Sunday and praised the Chicago-based movement’s Minister Louis Farrakhan.

Farrakhan has long held relationships with rappers and hip-hop artists. Snoop, whose real name is Calvin Broadus, called himself the leader of the “hip-hop community” and says he’ll always seek out the minister. Snoop gave a \$1,000 donation to the Nation of Islam, then sat on stage as Farrakhan spoke for more than three hours. Rapper Doug E. Fresh also attended but didn’t speak publicly.

Rapper T.I., whose real name is Clifford Harris, appeared via recorded video. He told followers that education is the key to success.

Florence opera program makes cuts

ROME (AP)—An Italian music organization says government funding cuts are forcing it to make “heavy cuts” in its spring and summer opera festival.

Florence-based Maggio Mu-

sicale Fiorentino says in a posting Friday on its Web site that a revised listing of performances will be listed soon.

The organization, whose festival is a European tradition that

showcases leading performers in major operas, also expressed gratitude to the city of Florence, which came up with some funds, allowing some of the program to be saved.



Rapper Snoop Dogg, left, is greeted by Minister Ishmael Muhammad before addressing the Saviors’ Day Convention in Rosemont, Ill., Sunday.

Readers’ ideas turn restless dreams into restful slumber

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I would like to comment on the letter from “Once a Mechanic ... in Arizona” (Dec. 24), who still dreams about his job even though he is now retired. I once worked in the customer service department of a major retailer. During one Christmas season, a recurring dream would interrupt my sleep each night. In my dream, my bedroom door would open and a stream of customers would file in and line up next to my bed, their arms loaded down with purchases or returns.



Dear Abby

After many frustrating nights of restless sleep, I finally figured out a solution. I envisioned a flashing neon sign on my headboard that read: “Lane Closed.” The following night when the customers began filing in, I took control. I sat up and pointed to the flashing sign above my bed. The customers turned around, walked out the door, and my sleep wasn’t disturbed again.

“Mechanic” needs to acknowledge that it is only a dream and direct it on a different path, as you suggested, by thinking about his hobbies or his family. Dreams are a part of our subconscious, but that doesn’t mean we can’t control their content.

DREAM WEAVER IN MANITOWOC, WIS.

DEAR DREAM WEAVER: Thank you for sharing your solution for achieving peaceful slumber. Allow me to offer another: Each night before I fall asleep, I say my prayers and count my blessings, one by one. “Sweet dreams are made of these ...” Read on:

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: A rich and blessed retirement sounds wonderful. If the dreams of “Mechanic’s” lifelong trade persist and he finds he really misses working, there is a way to honor that gift while still enjoying his retirement. He should check around to see if there are any mentoring programs in his area offered through social services. I’m sure many teens and young men would appreciate knowing someone with his skills.

JAN IN SPRING, TEXAS

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a master’s degree in physics and have been known to solve calculus problems in my dreams. “Mechanic” should understand he is not alone, and probably was very good at his job.

A.J. IN LITTLETON, COLO.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I used to work in several demanding areas at a manufacturing plant, and I would often dream about being unable to keep up with production. Finally, I learned to relax and say, “Let the night shift do it!” Then I would be able to move on to a better dream. Now that I’m retired, I still dream occasionally about going back—but only to visit, never to work.

DAYDREAMER, OLIVET, MICH.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Because “Mechanic” enjoys doing transmission repairs even though he is retired, perhaps he could make some sort of arrangement to offer his expertise to low-income families who have cars in need of repairs. It would be a way of helping people with a need while doing what he did for so long and misses.

A FELLOW ARIZONAN

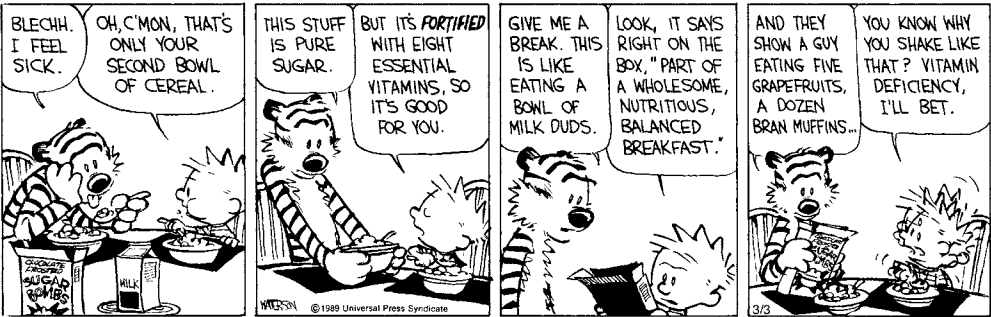
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Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



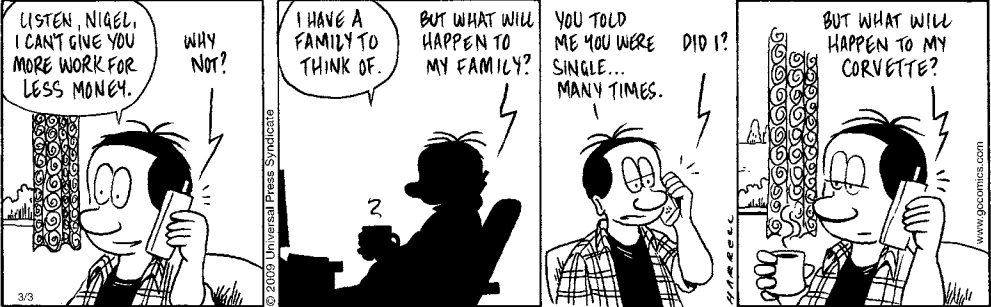
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Harvest Smith

5 Crafty

8 One of Henry VIII's Catharines

12 Shrek is one

13 Go like the wind

14 Hodgepodge

15 French fries, e.g.

17 Turnpike payment

18 Curry letter

19 Scepter

20 Relieve

21 Trench

22 Sticky stuff

23 Take ten

26 Baby food

30 Blueprint

31 The whole shooting match

32 Nevada city

33 Whodunit

35 Make pigtailed

36 Sphere

37 Luau staple

38 O'Neill's specialty

41 Columnist

42 Energy

45 Hindu royal

46 Grand view

48 Teensy bit

49 Superlative ending

50 Rainbow

51 Kelly or Rayburn

52 Personal question?

53 Prohibits

DOWN

1 "Clue" weapon

2 Ids' counter-parts

3 The "A" in "A&E"

4 Pod occupant

5 "Phooey!"

6 Told a big one

7 "Of course"

8 A little of everything, on "Jeopardy!"

9 Burn soother

10 Streamlet

11 Somersault

16 Silly Rabbit's desired cereal

20 Weep loudly

21 Marceau forte

22 Cowboy's sweetie

23 Spinning meas.

24 Tarzan portrayer

25 Part of UNLV

26 Thick-ness

27 Meadow

28 Half of bi-

29 Chic, to Austin Powers

31 Wall St. wheeler-dealer

34 Mound stat

35 Long-popular clown

37 Mottled pony

38 Party pooper

39 Assess

40 In due time

41 Whip

42 Brazilian rubber

43 Eastern potentate

44 Just say no

46 Church seat

47 Eve, originally

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer 3-3

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jessica Biel, 27; Jackie Joyner-Kersey, 47; Herschel Walker, 47; Ira Glass, 50

Happy Birthday: Nothing will be as it appears. Uncertainty regarding direction, location and your future may plague you but it will also help lead you in a direction that will satisfy your needs. This is a year to think matters through and then take action. Let go of the past and move forward with clear vision. Your numbers are 13, 15, 20, 24, 36, 39, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Consider what you want to accomplish in terms of your relationships, comfort and status. You can make some decisions based on the encounters you have with people from different backgrounds. Get involved in a humanitarian cause. ****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Surprise others with your choices. You have to stay one step ahead of everyone else and not give in or give up because of the competition. Take on a challenge and show your strength of character and courage. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Everything will be out in the open and easy for you to see. Don't get emotional when there is so much you can accomplish if you are focused on what you want. Added responsibilities for younger or older relatives or friends can be expected. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): The time to look for a new job or to get involved in a project that is different and captures your interest is now. Don't give up what you've already got until you know you have something to go to. Change is apparent but stay in control. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Gatherings, travel or even a convention will lead to some interesting contacts. Don't be surprised if someone from your past plays a role in a decision you have to make regarding love, contracts or a partnership. Expand your horizons. ****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't give in to a sob story, threats or ultimatums. Stand your ground and show you aren't a pushover. You can make headway with the people you have to deal with. Serious talks will bring about change. **

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Everything is there for you to excel, make improvements or enjoy your life—just make the effort. An encounter with someone you care for will lead to life-changing plans. Dealing with children will be a positive learning experience. *****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't be fooled by a fast talker or someone who wants too much from you. Self-deception will be your enemy, so be sure to rule out any misconception you may have about the possibilities of what you are trying to accomplish. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You need to make some changes regarding your earning potential and the way you are doing things currently. Pick up a new skill or try something altogether different. Someone who cares for you will encourage you to move in the direction best for you. ***

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You don't have to be aggressive to get what you want. Don't let a personal relation-

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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ship you have with someone interfere with what you need to do to get ahead. Children will be a source of inspiration. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Experience can be gathered by getting involved in something different or signing up for a course that interests you. Most of all, do things that are different from your normal routine. The interaction you have with others will spark your imagination. *****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Keep your emotions well hidden. Observing others will help you make the right choices. Someone you respect will open your eyes to the reality you are facing regarding your current relationship with someone from your past. **

Birthday Baby: You are a great communicator—sensitive, emotional and persuasive. You are insightful, intuitive, charismatic and energetic.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

8 4 7 5 6

9 1 8

5 9

2 3

1 4

5 7

2 4

5 9 7

7 9 1 3 2

Difficulty Level ★★

3/03

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5 9 4 6 1 2 8 7 3

2 6 8 7 4 3 9 5 1

1 7 3 5 9 8 4 2 6

8 5 6 2 3 1 7 4 9

7 4 2 8 6 9 3 1 5

9 3 1 4 5 7 2 6 8

6 8 5 9 7 4 1 3 2

4 1 9 3 2 6 5 8 7

3 2 7 1 8 5 6 9 4

Difficulty Level ★

3/03

STUMPED?

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WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK Solution: 10 letters

L S U N O T R E V L O W K T C

O A T N R Y H I S T O R I C S

D W C A S M O N A C H E N A C

G I I I L P I K I (R) N T G F E

E L E A G A O N U O (A) C S I N

P D D W T O C I I T L (E) I T I

O F I N A I L T L F S J (B) R C

L L U E P T A O I E O O R A T

E O G R O V E S E T D R E D C

M W A O E F I R E A E P T A E

R E A L T A A E F V H S T V T

A R E P P N K R E A R C I E O

D S M X G I U E E S L T R N R

E A N E H O N I R T A L A A P

C E R U T A N E T N O Y N A C

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Alpine, Alta, Archaeological, Artifact, Bear, Camp, Canyon, Cedar, Elevation, Explore, Fire, Groves, Guide, Hike, Historic, Kern, Kings, Lodgepole, Monache, Mountains, Native, Nature, Nevada, Picnic, Project, Protect, Ranger, Ritter, Scenic, Staicactites, Tour, Trail, Tree, Unspoiled, Vast, Waterfall, Wildflowers, Wolverton, Yokuts

Yesterday's Answer: Reminisce

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

STEP NEON

Find today's solution in this section

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235- NEWS

Shaq, Suns overcome Kobe to beat Lakers



PHOENIX (AP)—Shaquille O'Neal scored 33 points and the Phoenix Suns overcame a 49-point performance by Kobe Bryant to beat the Los Angeles Lakers 118-111 on Sunday.

Matt Barnes added 26 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists as the Suns, without Steve Nash for the third straight game because of a sprained right ankle, beat the Lakers for the first time in four tries this season.

Pau Gasol had 30 for the Lakers, while Bryant made 18 of a season-high 38 attempts in the 96th 40-point game of his career.

After his 45-point game against Toronto on Friday night, O'Neal has consecutive 30-point games for the first time since March 5-7, 2004, when he and Bryant were teammates in L.A.

Leandro Barbosa added 22 points and Grant Hill had 17 for the Suns.

Cavaliers 88, Hawks 87

At Atlanta, LeBron James scored 26 points, including the winning free throw with 1.6 seconds left, and the Cavaliers won for the seventh time in eight games.

The Hawks, after rallying from a 13-point deficit, squandered a five-point lead in the final 1:42. Delonte West hit a jumper, Mo Williams sank a 3 and James won it for the Cavs on their final possession. He drove from the top of the key and was fouled by Al Horford.

After missing the first free throw, James swished the second. The Hawks had a last chance, but Joe Johnson's jumper over James clanked off the rim as the horn sounded.

Johnson led the Hawks with 21 points.

Mavericks 109, Raptors 98

At Dallas, Jason Kidd handed out 15

assists to become the fourth player in NBA history with 10,000 for his career, and Dirk Nowitzki had 24 points and 10 rebounds for the Mavs.

Kidd reached the milestone with 1:04 left in the third quarter when he handed out his 13th of the night, passing to Brandon Bass for a 10-foot turnaround. He trails John Stockton (15,806), Mark Jackson (10,334) and Magic Johnson (10,141) on the NBA career list.

Josh Howard added 16 points and Antoine Wright had 15 for Dallas.

Chris Bosh paced the Raptors with 28 points and 10 rebounds. Andrea Bargnani added 18.

Pistons 105, Celtics 95

At Boston, Richard Hamilton had 25 points, Tayshaun Prince scored 15 and each hit a 3-pointer in the final 80 seconds to help the Pistons beat the Celtics.

Hamilton also had nine assists in his second straight start since Allen Iverson returned to Detroit because of a stiff back. The Pistons had lost five straight regular season games to the Celtics—9-of-11 including a six-game Eastern Conference final.

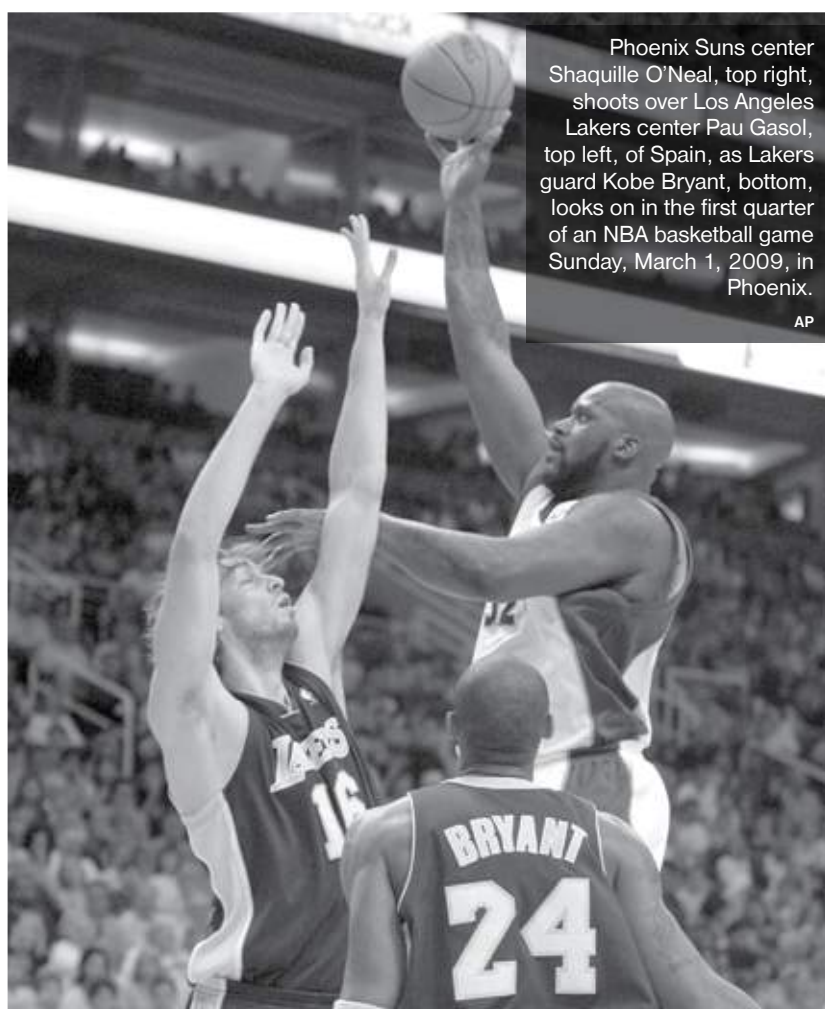
Celtics forward Paul Pierce scored 26. Glen "Big Baby" Davis, starting in place of the injured Kevin Garnett, added 18 points.

Hornets 99, Nets 96

At East Rutherford, N.J., David West scored 32 points and Chris Paul made two key steals in the final minute to lead the Hornets to their fourth straight win.

Rasual Butler added 22 points for New Orleans, and Paul had 14 points and nine assists.

Devin Harris and Vince Carter each had 26 to pace the Nets, winners of their two previous games. Harris also had 14 assists while Jarvis Hayes added 13 points.



Phoenix Suns center Shaquille O'Neal, top right, shoots over Los Angeles Lakers center Pau Gasol, top left, of Spain, as Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, bottom, looks on in the first quarter of an NBA basketball game Sunday, March 1, 2009, in Phoenix.

Angeles Lakers, Boston, Cleveland, Orlando and now, Denver.

That leaves San Antonio as the only current division leader the Pacers haven't beaten.

Chauncey Billups led the Nuggets with 27 points and seven assists. Carmelo Anthony scored 20 points, but was 8-for-24 from the field, and Nene added 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Trail Blazers 102, Spurs 84

At Portland, Ore., Brandon Roy and LaMarcus Aldridge each scored 26 points to help the Trail Blazers spoil the return of Tim Duncan to the Spurs.

The Spurs didn't even play Duncan in the fourth quarter after Portland led by as many as 29 points. The All-Star forward had missed the last three games with a right quad injury.

Steve Blake added 15 for the Blazers, who won their ninth straight at the Rose Garden Arena. Portland is 24-5 at home this season. Tony Parker had 15 points for the Spurs. Like Duncan, he did not play the fourth quarter.

Jazz 112, Warriors 104

At Oakland, Calif., Mehmet Okur scored 23 points, Deron Williams had a season-high 20 assists and the Jazz won their eighth straight.

Ronnie Brewer scored 21 points one night after getting a career-high 26 for the Jazz, who moved within two games of Northwest Division-leading Denver. Utah hasn't lost since receiving a 20-point thrashing from the Warriors in Oakland three weeks ago.

Corey Maggette scored 27 points and rookie Anthony Randolph had a career-high 20 for the Warriors, who rested leading scorer Stephen Jackson. Golden State also is resting Monta Ellis' surgically repaired left ankle for at least two weeks as a precaution.

Rockets 105, Timberwolves 94

At Minneapolis, one night after blowing a 17-point lead in the final six minutes, Yao Ming had 17 points, 11 rebounds and six blocks in the Rockets' victory.

Ron Artest scored 23 points and Aaron Brooks had 22 points and a career-high 10 assists for the Rockets, who had lost five of their last six games on the road.

Randy Foye scored 24 points and Craig Smith had 20 for the Timberwolves. Minnesota lost its sixth game

in a row and fell to 1-8 since star center Al Jefferson went down for the season with a torn ACL.

Pacers 100, Nuggets 94

At Indianapolis, Jarrett Jack had 28 points and eight assists, Troy Murphy had 22 points and 18 rebounds and the Pacers hung on to beat the Nuggets.

Marquis Daniels added 19 points and six rebounds for the Pacers, who've made a habit of beating the league's top teams. Indiana has defeated the Los

Dodgers: Manny Ramirez talks must now start from scratch



PHOENIX (AP)—The Los Angeles Dodgers have pulled their

\$45 million, two-year offer to Manny Ramirez, and owner Frank McCourt said Sunday that negotiations will have to start again from scratch.

The Dodgers announced last week that Ramirez had declined the team's latest offer, a \$25 million, one-year contract with a \$20 million player option for 2010. McCourt said no talks with Ramirez's representatives were scheduled for Sunday.

"We're in what I call a transition phase," McCourt said before the Dodgers lost 3-2 to the Chicago White Sox in their first game at their new spring training facility at Camelback Ranch. "We had an almost four-month negotiation which terminated on Thursday. Now we're in a quiet period. At some point we'll pick up negotiations, but with a fresh start."

The issue separating the two sides appears to be how much the contract is worth in present-day dollars.

General manager Ned Colletti and the Dodgers wanted to defer payment of \$10 million until 2011, \$10 million more to 2012 and \$5 million to 2013.

Ramirez's agent, Scott Boras, said Sunday in an e-mail to reporters that his most recent offer Saturday was for two years with "some deferred compensation" for a "net present value" of \$43.5 million, a compromise that Ramirez requested.

Nationals general manager Jim Bowden resigns

VIERA, Fla. (AP)—Jim Bowden's final move as Washington Nationals general manager was his own resignation.

Bowden abruptly stepped down Sunday morning after four seasons, leaving under the cloud of a federal investigation into the skimming of signing bonuses given to Latin American prospects.

He has maintained his innocence in the matter, but said Sunday, "I've become a distraction."

"It's an emotional decision. It saddens me. But I feel it's in the best interest of two of the things I love the most, and that's the Washington Nationals and baseball," Bowden added.

Seated at a table with Nationals president Stan Kasten before a small contingent of reporters and team officials, Bowden read from a prepared statement, sometimes deviating from the script as he struggled to contain his emotions.

No replacement was immediately announced.

"We have continued to work with Ned and the Dodgers to do away with the artificial barriers and attempt (to) get a deal completed," Boras said. "There is no issue with deferral money being part of any contract; just want to make sure the value is stated accurately and appropriately."

According to Boras, the team's last of-

"We're not planning on missing a beat," Kasten said. "Our staff has a meeting tomorrow morning, first thing. I'm not going to have anything to say to you about next steps for a while—later in the week."

Bowden is the only GM the Nationals have had since the franchise moved from Montreal to Washington before the 2005 season, overseeing a team that went 81-81 in that debut season but has been below .500 ever since.

Last season, the Nationals were a major league-worst 59-102.

"It takes a lot of courage for (Bowden) to do that," Washington manager Manny Acta said after Sunday's 7-5 exhibition loss to Baltimore. "Is he perfect? No. But few are brighter and few work harder."

Bowden's tenure with the club was marked by such moves as the trade for Alfonso Soriano, the failure to resign Soriano, free-agent busts such as Paul Lo Duca and reclamation

fer had a net present value of \$42 million. Boras' previous proposal was for \$45 million without any deferred money. So he said he met the Dodgers at the midpoint of those offers because that's what Ramirez directed him to do.

"However, we have yet to hear from them on our last three offers," Boras said.

projects such as Dmitri Young.

"When I came here ... the single thing that stood out for me about why we needed someone with Jim's skill is that he's resourceful," Kasten said. "We needed someone that would look around every corner, look under every rock to find the pieces that we could put into place. Because of that, we have a foundation that looks very exciting for '09."

Young revived his career in Washington in 2007—after a 2006 that saw him go through a divorce, undergo treatment for alcohol, substance abuse and depression, and plead guilty to assaulting his girlfriend before being released by the Detroit Tigers.

"He was known for giving guys second chances, me included," Young said, ticking off the beneficiaries of Bowden's penchant for redemption. "There wasn't a team out there that wanted to touch me with a 10-foot pole. He's the one that gave me an opportunity."

Also in the e-mail was a quote from Ramirez saying that he's been included throughout the process.

"I would not allow negotiations to take place without being involved and talk to Scott nearly every day," Ramirez was quoted as saying. "I have given Scott offers that he has given to the Dodgers and he has giv-

en me all offers from the team."

McCourt said Boras' proposal of \$45 million for two years with no deferred payments only came after Boras responded to the team's \$45 million offer with a proposal of \$55 million for two years. He said the Dodgers rejected that proposal.

"You can't get a no and then when the other side says, 'OK, we're going to start fresh,' you say, 'I meant yes,'" McCourt said. "That's not how it works. It's too little, too late. It wasn't multiple choice."

The owner also said Boras had encouraged deferred money to be part of the offers from the beginning.

Despite the sometimes acrimonious exchanges between the two camps, McCourt said he expects negotiations to resume soon.

"We want to see Manny a Dodger this year," he said.

Los Angeles carried a 2-0 lead into the ninth inning against Chicago but Gordon Beckham led off with a long home run off Victor Garate. The White Sox then loaded the bases, and Brandon Allen and Michael Restovich each drove in a run with a fielder's choice.

Hiroki Kuroda, Eric Milton and Claudio Vargas threw two scoreless innings apiece for Los Angeles. Mark Loretta and Blake DeWitt had RBI singles.

Mark Buehrle worked two scoreless innings for the White Sox. He struck out two, walked one and allowed one hit.

Ogilvy wins Match Play in a rout over Casey



MARANA, Ariz.
(AP)—Geoff Ogilvy won the Accenture Match Play Championship for the second

time in four years with a 4-and-3 victory over Paul Casey of England to stake his claim Sunday as the best in the world at match play.

In a relentless performance at Dove Mountain, the 31-year-old Australian did not trail over the final 63 holes of the tournament and did not have a bogey on his card over the last 57 holes.

He took the lead with a 6-foot birdie on the first hole of a 36-hole title match, and never gave Casey a chance. Ogilvy had a 3-up lead after the morning round, then shot 31 on the front nine to pull away.

A tournament that began with so much buzz over the return of Tiger Woods ended with a newfound appreciation for the match-play prowess of Ogilvy, who ran his career record to 18-3 in this fickle format.

"The best thing I can say is I enjoy the format," Ogilvy said. "Generally, when you enjoy something, you do it well."

Ogilvy won his third World Golf Championship—he will defend his title in two weeks at Doral in the CA Championship—the most of any player besides Woods, who has won 15 of these elite events.

And while Woods is a three-time winner of the Match Play Championship, Ogilvy ran his record in this tournament to 17-2. He lost in the championship match two years ago to Henrik Stenson, and lost in the first round last year to Justin Leonard.

Casey, who brought a 16-3-1 record in match play into the final, faced a 3-up deficit after the morning match and knew he had to play well to get back in the game. He birdied three of his next eight holes, and Ogilvy still stretched his lead to 5 up.



Geoff Ogilvy, of Australia, smiles as he talks about his victory over Paul Casey at the World Golf Championships Accenture Match Play Championship Sunday, March 1, 2009, in Marana, Ariz.

"I have no excuses right now," Casey said.

Ogilvy closed him out with a 6-foot birdie on the 15th hole. He won \$1.4 million and moves up to No. 4 in the world ranking. He became the first player this year with multiple victories on the PGA Tour, having opened the year with a wire-to-wire win at Kapalua.

This was like a home game.

Ogilvy now has won three times in the Tucson area over the last five years, starting with a victory in the old Tucson Open in 2005, before the Australian was eligible for the 64-man field

at the Match Play Championship.

Since then, Ogilvy has won a U.S. Open, three WGCs and the winners-only Mercedes-Benz Championship.

Casey came into the final match having led 79 of the 80 holes he had played in his five previous 18-hole matches.

That amazing mark didn't last long.

Ogilvy made birdie from 6 feet on the first hole, and when Casey failed to match him from 5 feet, it was the first time the Englishman had trailed all week. From there, it only got worse.

Ogilvy had a putt to win on the next eight holes, converting three of them

for a 4-up lead at the turn.

The final match is more marathon than sprint, although it was a bad omen for Casey. No one had come back from more than a two-hole deficit all week, and this was no exception.

The lone highlight for Casey came at the par-4 10th, when he hit his 6-iron from 200 yards landed perfectly against the slope and rolled into the cup for an eagle. But on the next hole, Ogilvy regained control with a spectacular shot of his own.

The par-5 11th was the most entertaining hole at Dove Mountain.

Casey drove into a bunker, so close to the face that he could only advance it far enough to leave him 262 yards to the hole. Despite such a predicament, Ogilvy attempted to reach the green with a 3-wood, only to hook it into the desert. The ball landed in a bed of jumping chollas that had fallen to the ground, and Ogilvy didn't bother removing it to keep from getting pricked by the needles.

The advantage shifted to Casey, who promptly pulled his 4-iron into such a bad spot left of the green that he had no angle to the pin and did well to pitch it 18 feet long. Ogilvy took his penalty drop, still didn't reach the green, then chipped in from 60 feet for par. He won the hole when Casey missed his putt.

Casey had one last chance to gain some momentum. Ogilvy's lead was 3 up when Casey drove to the front of the green on the par-4 15th. Ogilvy had to settle for par, and Casey missed a 6-foot birdie.

Ogilvy birdied the next hole to go back to 4 up, poured in a 12-foot birdie on the 17th after Casey was in tap-in range and wound up taking a 3-up lead to the break.

Casey's only hope was to cut into the lead quickly, but he missed too many putts to stay in the match. The rout was on when Ogilvy made an 8-foot birdie on the seventh, then hit his approach to 4 feet on the par-5 eighth.

It was far different from the last time Ogilvy won this event, in 2006 the last year it was held at La Costa. He had to go extra holes in his first four matches, and 10 times watched his opponent stand over a putt to win the match.

His only close call at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Club came in the second round. Shingo Katayama has a 12-foot birdie on the 17th hole to win the match. He missed, and Ogilvy stayed alive by making a 10-footer for par, eventually winning in 19 holes.

The rest of the week, the Australian was at his best.

2 NFL players among boaters missing off Fla. coast



CLEARWATER, Fla.
(AP)—The Coast Guard searched off Florida's Gulf Coast on Sunday for a fishing boat carrying NFL players Corey Smith and Marquis Cooper and two other men missing more than a day in choppy seas.

Smith, a defensive end for the Detroit Lions, and Cooper, an Oakland Raiders linebacker, were on a 21-foot vessel that left Clearwater Pass for a fishing trip Saturday morning and did not return as expected, the Coast Guard said Sunday. Crews used a helicopter and an 87-foot ship to search a 750-square mile area west of Clearwater Pass, but poor weather made the search difficult. Officials did not receive a distress signal from the missing craft.

Cooper owns the boat and he and Smith have been on fishing trips before, said Ron Del Duca, Smith's agent. The pair had been teammates on the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 2004. Two others were aboard: Will Bleakley and Nick Schuyler, both former University of South Florida players.

Coast Guard Capt. Timothy M. Close said the weather early Saturday had been fair, but worsened toward the evening as a front moved in. The National Weather

Service said seas were about 2 to 4 feet Saturday morning and increased to 3 to 5 feet in the afternoon. Late Saturday night, a small craft advisory was issued, when winds were around 20 knots and seas were up to 7 feet or more. There were no thunderstorms in the area.

Close said the men were traveling in a boat manufactured by Everglades. At least one of the men was an experienced boater, and relatives provided the Coast Guard with GPS coordinates from previous fishing expeditions.

Close said there was no communication with the men even before the weather started to pick up. They were expected home by early evening. No sign of them or the boat had been spotted by Sunday evening. Relatives told the Coast Guard the men had lifejackets and flares onboard.

Poor weather conditions could be dangerous for a boat the size of Cooper's.

"A 21-foot boat is a relatively small vessel to be 50 miles off shore in bad weather conditions, certainly the current weather conditions," Close said.

Close said there was no sign yet that the men sent a distress signal.

"That's not to say they didn't send one out," he said. "We didn't receive anything."

Danielle Mayes, owner of Jaxson's Bait House near the ramp where the men departed, said Saturday had been deceptively beautiful. The weather was warm, and boaters had packed the small parking lot overlooking seaside condominiums and light blue waters.

Mayes said many of the boaters who returned Saturday evening said they were surprised that the water had gotten so rough.

The Coast Guard search was mainly by air, and was hampered by the poor weather, Close said. He said there were 14-foot seas offshore and wind gusts of up to 30 mph. Water depth in the search area ranges from 20 to 50 feet. The Coast Guard originally sent a 47-foot ship to search for the men around 2 a.m. Sunday. It returned to dock about eight hours later and was replaced by a larger ship, in part because of the weather.

Smith, 29, had 30 tackles, including three sacks, and an interception in 12 games last season for the winless Lions. Smith, who is 6-foot-2, 250 pounds, also played for the San Francisco 49ers and played college ball at North Carolina State. He lives in Richmond, Va.

Del Duca said Smith is one of the

"good guys" of the league and was planning to start visiting teams as a free agent this week. He said he has spoken with Smith's family and is also in touch with Coast Guard officials.

"They've assured me that they're deploying all available resources to look for these guys and get them back," he said.

Cooper, 26, has played five seasons with the Buccaneers, Seahawks, Jaguars, Steelers and Raiders. He appeared in 26 games with the Buccaneers in 2004 and 2005, recording 30 tackles. He has played sparingly since as he has bounced between teams, appearing in 13 games and recording 10 tackles. Cooper, who is 6-foot-3, 230 pounds, played college ball at Washington. He grew up in Gilbert, Ariz., and his father Bruce is a prominent sportscaster for KPNX-TV in Phoenix.

Cooper told The Seattle Times in 2002 that one reason he chose Washington was the abundant fishing.

"I like fighting the fish," Cooper told the newspaper. "And just relaxing out there and being alone and being outside."

Bruce Cooper described his son as an avid fisherman who goes deep sea fishing "any opportunity he gets." The

two went deep sea fishing together two years ago.

"I swore I would never do so again," Cooper said in a statement. "I didn't like the fact that I couldn't see land. Needless to say I am very concerned. I am praying and hoping for the best."

Stu Schuyler, Nick's father, said his son had gone fishing with the same group of friends last weekend, apparently en route to a shipwreck about 50 miles offshore where fish are abundant. He said he left his son a message on his cell phone Saturday morning, asking him not to stay out too late because of the approaching storm.

"I'm optimistic," Schuyler said. "But I'm also realistic."

Lions spokesman Bill Keenist and Raiders senior executive John Herrera said the teams are monitoring reports. Both teams issued statements saying their thoughts and prayers are with the families of all the missing men and those involved in the search.

While the search continued, Cooper's pickup truck and boat trailer remained in the parking lot near the boat launch. On the dashboard was a one-day parking receipt that expired Sunday morning.

"Please contact the Coast Guard," a note left tucked underneath a windshield wiper read. "Someone was worried about your welfare."

Keener lauds SLLB on its 37th year

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER



The president and chief executive officer of the Little League-International extended his congratulatory message to the Saipan Little League Baseball on the occasion of its 37th year anniversary.

In a letter, Stephen D. Keener lauded

the efforts of the players and volunteers for keeping Little League's traditions alive in the CNMI.

Keener noted that from its humble its beginnings Little League has grown to be more than a baseball program.

He said Little League has proven that it is more than just competition but is also a leadership training program, family entertainment activity, and community development organization all rolled into one.

He said the league has been blessed with an incredible corps of volunteers working at the local level: board members, coaches, umpires, concession stand workers, grounds crew—the people who put the Little League program into action.

Keener said SLLB's counterparts in thousands of communities worldwide is the reason Little League is the world's largest and most respected youth sports program.

"I have little doubt that you have seen the fruits of your labors, the fun of being at the games, the thrill of seeing kids play and learn, the pride of knowing your community has come together to provide its children with a healthy, fun activity," noted Keener.

SLLB opened its 2009 season last Feb. 15 with a total of 31 teams—14 in the Major Division, six in the Juniors, five in Seniors, and six in the Big League.

Games are played on weekends at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios and Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan ballfields.

"It is my sincere hope that your memories and life lessons learned as children in

Mix Acers take early lead in Budweiser Open 8-Ball

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER



Utopia Mix Acers displayed near flawless shot-making in their win over the Snicker 8-Ball Knights to share the early lead in the Agingan Division, while two other teams are tied on top of the Obyan Division following the opening round of the 2009 Budweiser Open 8-Ball League last Feb. 24.

All five Mix Acers—Chester Hamoy, Chester Cuanto, Primo Ferrera, Clifford Hamoy and Mario Jumalon—won in the singles and prevailed in the first of two doubles matches to beat the vis-

iting Snicker 8-Ball Knights, 6-1.

Jumalon and Cuanto paired in the doubles to edge out the tandem of Rodel Dela Cruz and Ric Elepante, but the Knights' Larry Briones and Marvin Mendoza recovered from a 0-1 deficit by snatching the next two games to defuse the tandem of the Hamoy brothers and prevent a shutout.

In the battle of telecommunication companies, the visiting Docomo Hustlers won four of their five singles matches and split their two doubles assignments to score a 5-2 win over IT&E Voyagers.

With the win, the Hustlers are now running second. The team is composed of Senen Pangelinan, Rowel Mariano, Robert Sanciango, Jerry Soriano, Er-

win Gomez, and Joey Lucido.

Billy Bones Bad Boys, comprised of Joe Villagomez, Sam Babauta, Diamond Aldan, Dave Palacios, and Keiji Takeda, out-dued the Home Boys, 4-3, as the two brother teams are now occupying the third and fourth places, respectively in the seven-team field Agingan division.

Wild Wild West was the only other team that has not played.

The Obyan Division has more teams participating this year with eight, including current leaders D'Pirates Huwa and BwiBwi's Shark Attack.

Huwa leaned on the services of old reliables Ray Basa, Ray Taka, and Tero Taka to dispose off USSP Fotten Palau, 5-2, and join Shark Attack in

the division lead.

Shark Attack got the needed breaks at home from Patrick Taitano, Bill Limes, Bernard Kileleman, and Ben Norita to score an easy 5-2 win against the visiting Monte Carlo Perfect Spotters.

D'Pirates 8 Ballers and BwiBwi's Da Snipers also began their title quest on a bright note as both teams triumphed on the road.

Edward Suzuki, Pat Cepeda, Perry Inos, and Vince Cepeda won in singles to lift the 8 Ballers to a 4-3 win against their host USSP Wat Ever.

Leo Sablan, Bill Kaipat, and Leo Sablan carried the load for Da Snipers in their 4-3 decision against host team VFW Warriors.

ELIAS

From Page 28

sense of achievement and satisfaction from the youths and athletes you coach. You set goals for your programs and athletes," said Rangamar, who was named 2008 NMASA Coach of the Year during the NMASA Annual Awards Banquet late last month.

Rangamar added that his philosophy in coaching is based on Dr. Hiam Ginott's famous quotes.

"I have come to a frightening realization...I am the decisive element on the track or on the field. It is my personal approach that creates the climate for learning and personal performance. It is my daily mood that makes the weather bright or dreary. As a coach, I possess tremendous power to make my athletes lives miserable or joyous. I can

be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate, humor, hurt, or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether the experience of the sport is positive or negative and whether my athletes gain or lose self esteem," Rangamar quoted Ginott, a child psychologist and author.

Rangamar was honored during the NMASA Sports Banquet for his work with the CNMI Athletics Team that competed in the 2008 Oceania Area Championships here and the CNMI Women's Junior Nationals, who played in the 2008 Oceania Youth Tournament in Guam.

"The accomplishment with athletics this year was exceptional, as proven by all records set and broken by our athletes. To get 16 medals was just phenomenal, as we had to go up against powerhouse teams in the region. In the past, we were lucky to get a medal," said Rangamar.

"When I started taking athletes to meets, nobody mingled with our athletes or even recognized we were there other than our Micronesian neighbors. So I made a promise back then that I would change that and would one day bring a high level competition to Saipan, for our people to see. It was a long and tedious work, but we succeed in gaining support from the Oceania Athletics Association," he added.

Rangamar said bringing the Oceania Championships in the CNMI would not be possible without the help of Northern Marianas Athletics officials and volunteers.

"With the hard work of several individuals, like Dr. Kurt Barnes, Robin Sapong, Rep. Tebuteb, the local organizing members and volunteers, we were able to put a lasting impression on our off-island competitors and visitors. Compliments like 'this is the best

ever championships' is like icing on the cake after all the things we had to go through. To see our athletes mingle, share laughs with other athletes, and be recognized as one of the up-and-coming programs in the region is a major accomplishment," Rangamar said.

Rangamar also thanked his NMA, Basketball Association of Northern Mariana Islands, and Division of Sports and Recreation family, and his own family for helping him survived a challenging season.

"It was a challenge, but again, it wouldn't be possible without the understanding of my boss [director Joe Lizama], NMA officers, BANMI officers, athletes, and most importantly my family. This circle of support knew my commitment and passion in what I do and managing my time between each endeavor required their support also. It was a two-way street," Rangamar said.

RUNNIN'

From Page 28

last two shots in the stretch.

A Denard Norita running jumper gave the Runnin' Rebels a 96-94 lead, with less than a minute left in the game. Quichocho then lost its chance to tie the game, when Lerio tried to attack the basket, but was stripped of possession by Sylvan Teregeyo.

The Runnin' Rebels went for a fastbreak play, but Cadagat made a defensive stop, blocking Jose Tumaquip's layup, and tapping the ball to a teammate.

It was Quichocho's opportunity to step on the pedal with Cadagat leading

the break, but he decided at the last minute to kick the ball out to Lerio. Lerio then dribbled toward the middle and attacked the Runnin' Rebels' defense, anew. Again, he was unsuccessful, as he lost possession with Ben Lisua slightly tapping the ball. But Palero took the loose ball and gave it to Leo Itaas, who pulled up for a 10-footer from the left baseline and missed the shot.

The Runnin' Rebels collared the rebound and Quichocho Law Office gave up two preemptive fouls in the ensuing plays with the last foul sending Tumaquip to the 15-foot line, with six seconds left on the clock.

Tumaquip made the first charity with the ball hitting nothing but the bottom of the net. But he muffed the second one

and there was a battle for a rebound won by Teregeyo, who could not hang on to the ball, as he bumped into a Quichocho defender and fell on the floor.

Palero then picked up the leather and passed it to Lerio, who attempted a desperation shot from downtown and missed, preserving the victory for the Runnin' Rebels.

Tumaquip paced the Runnin' Rebels with 27 points, while Bobby Coldeen chipped in 23. They drilled two triples apiece in the third period, allowing the Runnin' Rebels to seize control of the game after trailing at halftime, 48-46.

The duo combined for 23 of the Runnin' Rebels 33 points in the third quarter, giving their team a 79-73 lead, entering the fourth quarter.

Cadagat led all scorers with 41 points.

In the first game, IT&E won via forfeit over Docomo Pacific, which had only three players showing up for the match.

IT&E now has a 6-2 record. Docomo dropped to a 2-6 slate, as it also lost its make-up game against Diamond Auto Fixers Thursday night, 95-90.

Runnin' Rebels 97 – Tumaquip 27, Coldeen 23, Lisua 12, Norita 12, Teregeyo 9 L. Rangamar 7.

Quichocho Law Office 95 – Cadagat 41, Palero 12, Hugos 9, Lerio 8, Demapan 6, Moises 6, Capalad 5, Tagle 5, Pantaleon 2.

Scorinby quarters: 29-20, 46-48, 79-72, 98-95.

PIC

From Page 28

prising that we don't know how are we going to use it," SSC treasurer Lisa Kimball said.

PIC general manager Kieran Daly hopes SSC will use the money to teach more kids to swim and encourage them to continue having a healthy lifestyle.

"Run the club with integrity and teach swimmers that nothing is more

important than your health. I see people spend thousands of dollars on cars and houses, but the most important thing is your health, education, and of course your family. Spend a bit more time and effort in this area and you will reap the benefits in the long term," Daly said.

"On behalf of the SSC board, the parents, and the swimmers, we would like to thank PIC for their donation. This will go a long way, especially at this time when most of us are experiencing financial problems," Kimball said.

PIC has been a supporter of SSC, but in the past, the former only donated equipment to the club.

"PIC donates money to many sporting, educational, and health organizations. This was not the first time we have donated funds to SSC. Normally, we purchase equipment that the children can use when learning and developing their swimming ability," Daly said.

Daly added giving donations to various organizations is PIC's way of sharing the blessings the company is receiving.

"PIC has had a favorable year due to the support from the local community and the very dedicated staff at PIC, so we are very proud to be able to provide some funding for the resident sporting and educational groups on Saipan," he said.

"SSC has been a long standing club and the CNMI and SSC is going through some very tough economic times. I would not want to see such a club fold after the history and the benefits it has brought to the residents of Saipan," Daly added.

the CNMI Little League have served you well as adults. May all who have been shaped by your commitment and legacy, in turn serve others so that the impact continues without end" Keener said.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	47	14	.770	—
Philadelphia	29	29	.500	16 1/2
New Jersey	26	33	.441	20
New York	24	35	.407	22
Toronto	23	38	.377	24

Central Division

Cleveland	46	12	.793	—
Detroit	29	29	.500	17
Milwaukee	29	33	.468	19
Chicago	27	33	.450	20
Indiana	26	36	.419	22

Southeast Division

Orlando	43	16	.729	—
Atlanta	33	26	.559	10
Miami	31	27	.534	11 1/2
Charlotte	25	35	.417	18 1/2
Washington	14	45	.237	29

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	39	19	.672	—
Houston	38	22	.633	2
New Orleans	36	22	.621	3
Dallas	36	23	.610	3 1/2
Memphis	15	43	.259	24

Northwest Division

Denver	39	21	.650	—
Portland	37	22	.627	1 1/2
Utah	37	23	.617	2
Minnesota	18	41	.305	20 1/2
Oklahoma City	14	45	.237	24 1/2

Pacific Division

LA Lakers	48	12	.800	—
Phoenix	34	25	.576	13 1/2
Golden State	20	39	.339	27 1/2
LA Clippers	15	45	.250	33
Sacramento	13	48	.213	35 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Phoenix 118, LA Lakers 111
Cleveland 88, Atlanta 87
Dallas 109, Toronto 98
Detroit 105, Boston 95
New Orleans 99, New Jersey 96
Houston 105, Minnesota 94
Indiana 100, Denver 94
Portland 102, San Antonio 84
Utah 112, Golden State 104

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

BUDWEISER CAGING STANDINGS

CNMI Nationals	6	1
IT&E	6	2
O'Acres	5	3
Diamond Auto Fixers	3	4
Quichocho Law Office	3	5
Docomo	2	6
Runnin' Rebels	2	6

LOYOLA

From Page 28

and Katie Lai. The first set of the championship match was a neck-and-neck battle with Loyola and Tan prevailing, 7-5. The Saipan netters then completed its unbeaten record in the Shirley's Open with a 6-4 win in the second set.

Tan also played in the women's doubles finals in the 35-and-above age group. But she and partner Sally Lee bowed to Katsura Nishizawa and Lisa Provido, 3-6, 5-7.

Loyola was paired with Khay Sung in the men's doubles 35-and-above age group and the duo won over Jay Cruz and Fred Nishihira, Jr. in the semifinals, 6-3, 7-5.

In the finals, Loyola and Sung lost to the tandem of Torgun Smith and Chris Blalock.

The doubles competition in the Shirley's Open was held from Feb. 20 to 22, only a few days after Loyola and Tan played in the 2009 Coconut Classic Tennis on Saipan.

Tan ruled the women's open singles division of the Coconut Classic, besting Kinumi Tanaguchi and Sakiko Eda in the round-robin tournament.

Loyola advanced to the semifinals of the men's open singles before losing to eventual runner-up Jeff Race, who bowed to Kirk Schuler in the title match.

Meanwhile, singles competition in the Shirley's Open was held last weekend.

2009 SSC Annual Heptathlon Meet



Saipan Swim Club's Junior Pamaran in action in the 100m butterfly swim of the 2009 SSC Annual Heptathlon Meet held last month at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.



Michael Moran of SSC plunges into the pool during the 100m backstroke event.



Bryce Daly of SSC nears the finish line in the 50m breaststroke event.



SSC's Grace Kimball takes a quick breather in the 100m freestyle swim.



Tsunami Saipan's Quintin Ramsey cools down after a race.



Tsunami Saipan's Cooper Graf in the 100m breaststroke race.



A Tsunami Saipan swimmer cheers for his teammates.



Tsunami Saipan's Angel De Jesus competes in the 50m freestyle event.



Tsunami Saipan and SSC swimmers wait for their turn on the blocks.



Tsunami Saipan's Ashley Welch in the 50m backstroke race.



Two swimmers race in the 50m breaststroke event.



Ogilvy wins Match Play in a rout over Casey

Geoff Ogilvy won the Accenture Match Play Championship for the second time in four years with a 4-and-3 victory over Paul Casey of England to stake his claim Sunday as the best in the world at match play.

25

Saipan Tribune Sports

Shaq, Suns overcome Kobe to beat Lakers

Shaquille O'Neal scored 33 points and the Phoenix Suns overcame a 49-point performance by Kobe Bryant to beat the Los Angeles Lakers 118-111 on Sunday.

24



28 TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2009

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Loyola, Tan win doubles in Guam Open

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan instructor Peter Loyola teamed up with Lydia Tan in notching the mixed doubles open title in the 2009 Shirley's Guam Open Tennis Tournament at the Guam Hilton Hotel tennis courts last month.

The pair of Loyola and Tan won four matches in the tournament organized by George Lai.

The two Saipan netters opened their campaign in the Shirley's Open with a straight sets victory over the tandem of Ian Batherson and Amber Gadsden, 6-3, 6-4.

In the second round, the duo of Loyola and Tan posted a similar 6-3, 6-4 triumph over Shinzo Nakamura and Katsura Nishizawa to advance to the semifinals.

Loyola and Tan were paired against Ray Miranda and Toni Evaristo in the semifinals and the Saipan betts recorded their easiest win in the tournament with a 6-2, 6-1 rout of their Final Four foes.

In the title match, the tandem of Loyola and Tan had a showdown with Guam coach Sam Lai

See LOYOLA on Page 26



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, runners-up Sam Lai and daughter Katie and champions Lydia Tan and Peter Loyola pose for a group photo after their title match in the mixed open doubles event in the 2009 Shirley's Guam Open Tennis Tournament held at the Guam Hilton Hotel tennis courts last month.

Runnin' Rebels snap skid

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



The Runnin' Rebels are back on their feet, ending a six-game slide following a 98-95 victory over Quichocho Law Office in the 2008-2009 BANMI/Budweiser Basketball League Friday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Runnin' Rebels improved to a 2-6 record, while it was Quichocho's turn to go on a skid, dropping two games in a row for a 3-5 record.

Behind by as much

as eight points midway in the fourth, 86-78, Quichocho Law Office slowly caught up with the Runnin' Rebels with Bonbon Cadagat, Sonny Lerio, and Larry Palero leading the rally.

But the Runnin' Rebels still escaped with the win, as Lerio committed two errors and Quichocho Law Office missed its

See RUNNIN' on Page 26

The Runnin' Rebels' Denard Norita goes up for a shot against Quichocho Law Office's Larry Palero during their game in the Budweiser caging Friday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Elias Rangamar holds the 2008 NMASA Coach of the Year award he received during the NMASA Annual Sports Banquet last month at the Seaside Hall of Saipan Grand Hotel.

Elias: Best reward is athletes' achievement

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

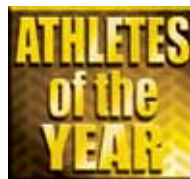
Fifth of a six-part series

Two-time NMASA Coach of the Year awardee Elias Rangamar believes the best reward coaches get are not big and elegant trophies, rather it is the sense of satisfaction they get from the achieve-

ments made by their athletes.

"There are too many coaches out there who are very deserving of such awards and don't get recognized. I don't have 'coach of year award' as one of my goals when I set my goals for a certain year and I believe it's the same as all the other coaches on island.

The best award is seeing a See ELIAS on Page 26



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pacific Islands Club general manager Kieran Daly, third right, and assistant to the general manager Vicky Villagomez, second left, pose with officers of Saipan Swim Club after PIC donated \$5000 to the club on Feb. 14.

PIC donates \$5K to SSC

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Pacific Islands Club handed a \$5,000 donation to Saipan Swim Club during the 4th Annual Saipan

Swim Club Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim on Feb. 14.

Surprised SSC officials and swimmers expressed their sincerest appreciation to PIC and its management for the company's kindness.

"It was a great Valentine's gift, a surprising one. So sur-

See PIC on Page 26